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Abstract

This thesis aims to examine and contextualize the histories, meanings, and the messages behind a number of the most significant classical structures in Helsinki, looking in particular at who erected these buildings and why they did so, along with what the planners and architects were trying to emphasize through their architectural design choices. The legacies of these builders and their buildings are also to be analysed. Specifically, this thesis does not aim to answer why Finland has classical architecture, but rather what it means for this young nation to have it, especially so in such significant abundance and considering that a great many of the nation's most important buildings have been designed in this particular style.

Keywords
Classical Architecture, History, Helsinki, Classicism, Nationalism, Romanticism, Imperialism, Western Identity, Finnish Architecture

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Introduction

"You can't imagine how beautiful Helsinki will be, and how beautiful it is now."[1]

- Carl Ludwig Engel, 1831

Nine years after saying this, the Berlin-born Prussian architect Carl Ludwig Engel died, only sixty-two years into his life, and another twelve years before the completion of the Helsinki Cathedral, the epicentre of his life's masterpiece project – the Helsinki Senate Square. By 1831 Helsinki Cathedral was only a year under its construction, and had Engel lived past 1840 to see further development of the city he so profoundly shaped and influenced, it is likely that he would be quite pleased with his former words from so long ago in addition to the many design decisions he made, given that Helsinki is widely acknowledged today to be a very beautiful city indeed. The Senate Square is one of, if not the most tourist-visited and recognizable area(s) from throughout the entirety of the city still today, for few neighbourhoods of Helsinki can match its magnitude, history, or stylistic impressiveness. In addition to all of this though, it also remains both the city's and the nation's most powerful and prevalent statement of classical architecture.

Classical architecture is not just one of Helsinki's most prominent architectural styles – it is one of Finland's most recognizable appearances overall, and the same is true throughout both the other Nordic and Baltic countries, as well as for much of Europe in general – especially so for Northern Europe. Cities like London, Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, and St. Petersburg too are rich with classical revivalism ornately decorating their most integral and revered city spaces. Throughout Finland, Engel played a direct part in that spread, as his designs were realised not only in Helsinki, but also in the former capital of Turku, and even further west in the now-autonomous islands of Åland. Engel's employment for the Russian Empire also had him working in Estonia and Russia proper, and thus we can accept that the entirety of the north-eastern Baltic Sea area has been quite literally shaped by his design influence, and that the appearances of these nations, at least in some regards, are reflections of this architect's ideals and those of the period he lived in. He was not the first to bring classicism to Finland, although he was the most influential.

What naturally develops from such discussion is the particular question of 'why.' Why, exactly, is there so much of this style across Europe – and especially across Northern Europe at that? What about this appearance in particular made it so coveted those centuries and even mere decades ago, with its origins laying deeply beneath further centuries of time and in rather distance places?

[1]Klinge, Matti and Laura Kolbe. Trans. Malcolm Hicks. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 1st pr. of the rev. ed. Helsinki: Otava, 2007. 27.

Are its reasons for being here numerous, or are they simply more symbolic and microcosmic for a larger (and now antiquated) statement about the transferral of power from the ancient, decadent south of Europe to its modern, industrialized north? This thesis aims to answer all of these questions and more by taking a specific look at the histories and the evolutionary developments of classical revivalist architecture and its inner movements of design in Helsinki. Given this city's history of deliberate design, another aim is to demonstrate how similar processes may have occurred elsewhere across Northern Europe as well. Moreover, Helsinki's classical architecture history will be told alongside the developmental story of the independent Finnish nation in an effort to answer exactly why this metropolis looks the way it does with so many of its key governmental and societal buildings being of classical design.

There are not countless classical structures in Helsinki, however, there are more than enough to be manifestly seen on a daily basis throughout the city. One can acknowledge that this is an integral architectural style to the society and culture of this capital city and the same is true for some of the other major towns and cities across Finland. Those who are regulars within the city centre and its nearest neighbourhoods are certainly also of the most frequent and concentrated exposure to Helsinki's classical offerings. To name a few, the inner-city boroughs of Kruununhaka, Kaivopuisto, Eira, and Kamppi all harbour their own significant shares of this historic and powerful statement style, along with smaller and more subtle examples which can be seen further out from the downtown core, such as the well-known Herttoniemi Manor house from the tail-end of the Napoleonic era. Additionally, even some of the different architectural styles which can be seen in downtown Helsinki throughout these aforementioned neighbourhoods and others display the influences of classicism without even necessarily being classical, such as with the city's many Jugendstil and Art Nouveau structures adorned with recognizably classical motifs.

Helsinki makes for a fitting case study for this kind of examination because its unique place as something of both a Nordic and Baltic city allows us to also understand how similar developments took place concurrently throughout the rest of these geographical and cultural areas. Helsinki's unique nature also allows for greater discussion for the rest of the nation of Finland overall. Furthermore, given the widespread commonness of classical architecture throughout so much of Europe and the Western World at large, one can also look to Helsinki in particular since this younger capital was deliberately built and designed. Additionally, its classical structures are notably representative of the specific movements which were occurring within classicism throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries.

Research Questions

The primary research question of this thesis does not ask why Helsinki has classical architecture, but rather what it means for Helsinki to have it, especially so prevalently, and in particular what each separate structure means as its own manifestation of this style. This thesis additionally aims to explore and answer what these structures all mean in conjunction with one another, as they are all differing iterations and varying statements of the same style and of the same architectural language. As is evident with the title of this thesis, the aim is to determine the meanings behind the buildings as intended by their designers, the messages which they emit, and the histories behind them. On that note in particular, the reason each of these places has been chosen for examination is because each one of them has provided or continues to provide an essential service to the shaping of the Finnish nation. Chronologically speaking, each given chapter's structures represent a different era not only in the story of the Finnish nation-building process, but also of their own individual eras in art and architecture, as well as perspectives on the wider social and political movements which occurred throughout European society at the time. In this way, each chapter's subject matter allows us to see both the steps in the development of the independent nation of Finland, as well as the classical architectural movement of the day, given that these buildings were designed and built when different movements within classical architecture were at the height of fashion for their time.

A thesis project of this length naturally cannot focus on every aspect. The topics and subjects presented have been selected based on the contributions of the structures to both Finland's and Helsinki's respective societies, along with their historical importances, as well as their key and defining outdoor exterior features – a great many of which carry significant socio-political commentary and charge. In particular, the classical structures within the sea fortress Suomenlinna were chosen for examination chiefly because of their age in pre-existing all which came to Helsinki thereafter, but also because through this example we can examine the earliest iterations and the remnants of 18th-century imperialism in Helsinki. The buildings of the Senate Square were chosen as the next subject chronologically because of their sizes and central importances, as well as the fact that they too were established as pronounced statements of imperialism. The (Old) Student House and Ateneum buildings were selected for discussion and analysis because both structures bear comparative and contrastive similarities and differences through their outward appearances, their respective socio-political commentaries, their neighbouring locations, and because they were designed and constructed within a similar timeframe in addition to their respective institutional and historical significances. Furthermore these two structures were also erected after several decades of Russian rule over Finland. Both buildings also function as statements of the Finnish Romanticism

movement, which was crucial for the later development of Finnish independence. The same holds true for the reason that the National Archives and House of the Estates buildings were selected for this thesis, in addition to their close mutual proximities to the Senate Square and because of their essential governmental and societal roles. Much like their neighbouring Senate Square, these two structures also harbour a great deal of imperial style in their appearances. Lastly, the Parliament House was chosen because of its integral and monumental importance to the governance of the nation, in addition to its pronounced political commentaries by way of its appearance. Many of these examinations will focus largely on the main façades of these buildings, as these are typically by far the most decorated and expressive parts of these structures, and thus also those which offer the most information which can be analysed.

Structure of this thesis

This thesis is composed of six chapters, five of which discuss a different architectural edifice in Helsinki of a different historical era and of a different branch of design within the confines and movements of classical architecture. The first chapter examines the early history of classical architecture: how it came to be, how it spread across the ancient world, and how it was later picked up by revivalists who viewed it and upheld it as the superior architectural style above all others. In particular, the aim of this chapter will be to demonstrate that architecture, as a physically constructed expression of power, moves with power, and how essentially all classically-styled architecture since its first iterations are attempting to accomplish the exact same goal, which is to imitate what is considered to be the apex appearance of legitimacy and might. The further aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how architecture, and specifically classical architecture, has moved and manifested itself outside of its area of conception, and from this, how it later arrived here in Finland, from which it became of monumental importance.

The second chapter begins with a contextual historical explanation regarding why Suomenlinna (or Sveaborg as it was originally dubbed) was constructed, why certain neoclassical aesthetic choices were made within its defensive stronghold walls, why other design plans for the fortress went without being realised, and in regards to classicism, what the place means as an architectural statement along with the intentions that were behind its construction. Primary focuses will be given to the site's Great Courtyard along with the Ehrensvärd monument, which is an acute and intriguing example of neoclassical revivalist revisionism. A selection of the site's other neoclassical buildings, several of which are still standing today and which make for some of the oldest neoclassical buildings in the Helsinki area, will also be discussed.

The third chapter will tell the story of the Senate Square, firstly starting with a backstory as to how Finland had developed since the years following Suomenlinna/Sveaborg's completion, and how the Senate Square first came into being as a concept. Following that, this chapter will examine why the Senate Square looks the way it does with specific focuses on numerous elements of its design, including what was altered about it after the death of its lead architect, C. L. Engel, as well as discussion about how it was originally supposed to look. What was changed consequently also altered the statement that the square was originally intended to make. Additionally, this chapter will focus on the socio-political underpinnings and implications which the structures of the Senate Square emit.

The fourth chapter will cover the neighbouring buildings of Old Student House and the Ateneum museum. These two structures, both of which have quite a lot in common with very pronouncedly classical appearances, make strikingly different socio-political and ideological commentaries through their designs. This chapter will analyse these in-depth whilst also digging into who built them, and who their statement architecture messages were for of the great many which are manifestly visible, but which may go unnoticed by most spectators or passers-by. Following this, Chapter Five will examine two prominent classical edifices which sit right behind the Senate Square – the National Archives of Finland headquarters, and the House of the Estates, both of which were constructed and designed under a former Helsinki University of Technology professor named Gustaf Nyström. The noticeable contrasts of these buildings will be examined, but also their similarities along with their visible statements and messages, and the House of the Estates in particular will receive extra attention due to the great controversies which surrounded its classical design, both before and after it was constructed.

The sixth and final chapter will open by discussing the highly significant national developments of the country since the turn of the twentieth century, and will discuss the Parliament House as the last classical edifice of great significance to the country. This building is still today the operational head of the nation, and ergo by some senses also indisputably the most important man-made physical structure within the borders of Finland. Therefore, particular focuses will be cast upon why, exactly, it has the appearance that it has, and what was being sought by its designer, Johan Sigfrid Sirén, and by those who elected his design to be realised. Once again, and in alignment with each chapter prior, an analysis will also be made into what the building says and announces through its design; what it stands for, and what it represents.

Following these six chapters, the concluding remarks will reflect on the main themes and argumentative points of this thesis, primarily covering what it means for Helsinki, as a young and

deliberately designed capital, to have its significant neoclassical abundance. This chapter will specifically address the political ramifications and meanings of living in a relatively young nation with a classical architecture tradition which spans back well over a century before the independent nation was conceived as we know it. An analysis of Helsinki's architectural relationship with nationalism through neoclassicism, along with analyses on Finland's western and European identities will be made.

Data and Methods

This thesis has been composed through a qualitative research analysis which was achieved almost entirely through the usage of published works of literature, along with some online academic sources. Some few texts have been translated from their original languages of Swedish and/or Finnish, either by myself, or through the help of multilingual acquaintances. The great majority of the works in question, however, have been either originally written or professionally translated into English. Regarding their subject matter, most of the works which have been used for this thesis are architectural history books which focus on the development of classical architecture throughout the ages, and several of these works have pertained particularly to the architectural history of Finland. Additionally, the books which have made their way into this thesis in terms of discussion and citation are those which were found by me to be the most useful for supporting and providing evidence for my analyses and arguments. They are naturally only a particular selection of many more which were read through, examined, and considered over the course of the past year.

Previous Research

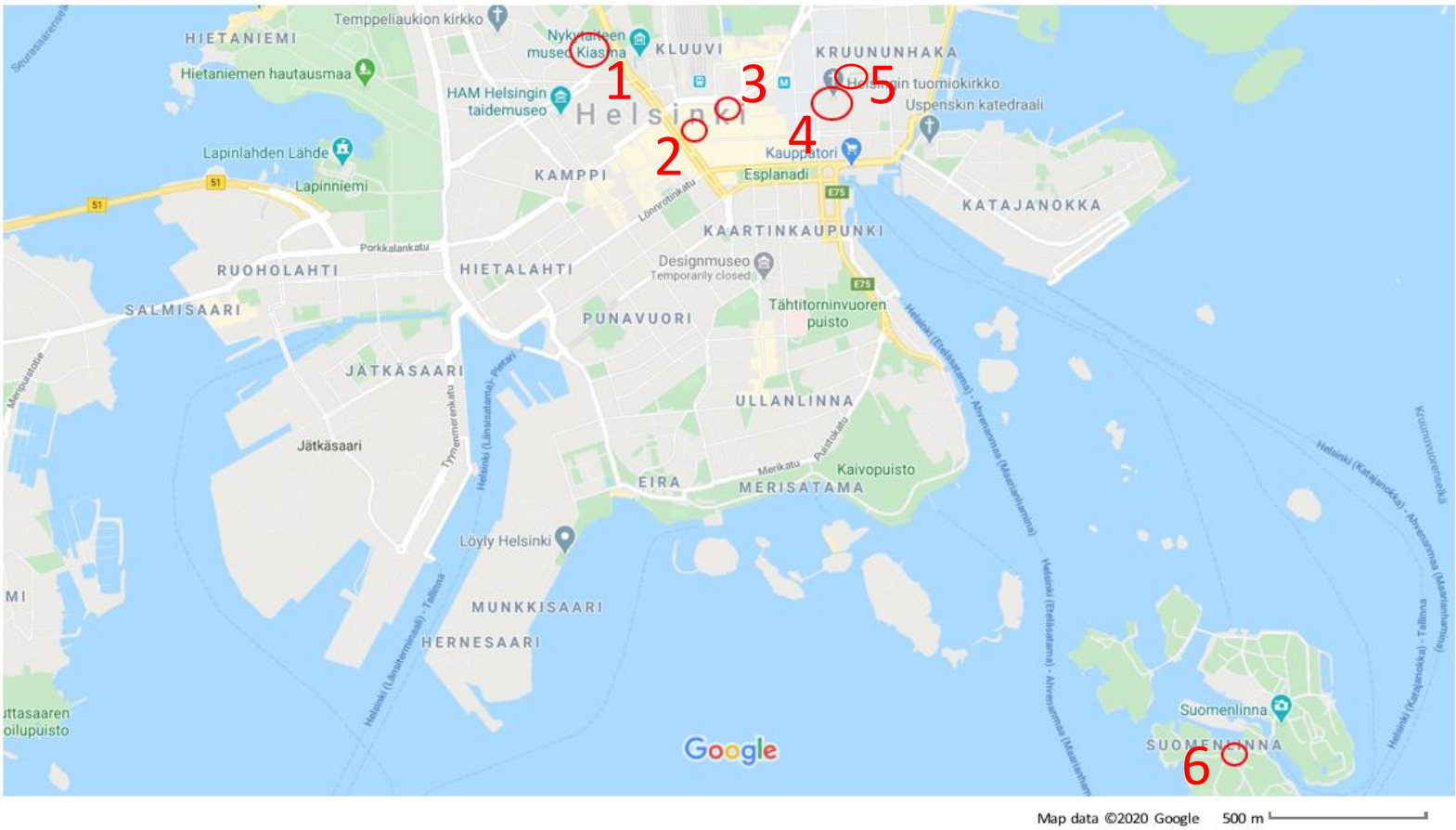
Insofar as I could tell from doing this master's thesis project and its accompanying research, there have been a great number of books written on Finnish architecture over the past several decades, many of which focus in part and with significance on the presence of classical architecture throughout the country and chiefly in Helsinki. Through my searches, however, I came across almost nothing written in English specifically assessing the meanings and messages behind these buildings here in Helsinki and in Finland, although I was certainly able to find works which went into great detail about their histories and significances. With this in mind, I hope that this thesis is able to provide some new and original insights to what appears to be a rather undiscussed branch of the topic of classical architecture in Helsinki (and in Finland more generally overall), at least from what appears to be available in English.

One book in particular was of biblical importance for the formulation of this thesis: *The Classical Language of Architecture* by Sir John Summerson, one of Britain's most celebrated architectural historians of the twentieth-century. In this book, and as the title suggests, Summerson

outlined and demonstrated that classical architecture is a form of communication composed of numerous statements, with each individual element of a classical structure uttering a certain statement by contribution to the overall structure, and with each complete structure overall adhering to and speaking the same language as other classical structures from both the past and present. In order to demonstrate this, Summerson followed the evolution of classical architecture by covering its different movements and developments from antiquity to contemporary times. Chiefly for this thesis, Summerson's teachings have been applied in realising that Helsinki too has its own unique classical architectural language history, and from this, that Helsinki's classical architectural language is something which can be pinpointed, examined, and discussed in order to help us understand just what was going through the minds of the architects who designed and constructed so much of this city with so many of its defining and key buildings. The works and thoughts of numerous Finnish historians, architectural historians, and like experts, such as Matti Klinge, Nils Erik Wickberg, Rainer Knapas, Ville Lukkarinen, and others, also feature prominently in this thesis.

Labelled Map of Helsinki

The following image has been downloaded from Google Maps, from which it has been remotely edited for the purposes of sharing the specific locations of the structures mentioned throughout this thesis. Located nearest to the top of the image is the Parliament House of Finland (1), which lies on Mannerheimintie, one of downtown Helsinki's most important avenues. Further down that way is the Old Student House (2), located near the intersection of Aleksanterinkatu. Close by, around the corner and across from the Helsinki Central Railway Station, at what is now the main atrium of the heart of the city, sits the Ateneum art museum (3). Immediately eastward from there, two blocks over, lies the imposing Senate Square (4), and diagonally behind that sits the House of the Estates building along with the headquarters of the National Archives of Finland (5). Roughly three kilometres southeast of this area and off the coast of the mainland sits the walled archipelagic 18th-century stronghold of Suomenlinna, which is maintained today as one of Finland's most popular tourism visitation sites, as well as a residential living space. Rather than encircling the entirety of the archipelagic grouping, the location of the Ehrensvärd monument within the Great Courtyard of Suomenlinna (6) has been circled for more precision, given that they are the primary elements of classicism which will be discussed in the first chapter of this thesis.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Chapter 1: The Ancient Origins of Classical Architecture

1.1: A Natural Evolution

In order to better understand how classical architecture came to Northern Europe the ancient south, and how it came to Finland in particular, we must first examine the conception of classical architecture, and how it was initially disseminated throughout the ancient world. To start, it is commonly recognized that classical architecture was not at all the result of one early and unnameable primeval architect's stroke of genius, as had been commonly considered and believed before throughout the ages. Instead, it is now widely accepted that classical architecture as we know it, with its concrete colonnades, triangular pediments and porticos, along with all other elements which give off the typical appearance of a classical structure, developed out of more primitive means.

Specifically, it was the French abbot Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-1769) who first proposed that the typical classical architecture appearance evolved from early human huts which relied on large tree trunks as their major support beams. Sir John Summerson, a crucial architectural historian of the 20th century, stated that Laugier explained in his own words that the simplistic early human hut is "the model upon which all the magnificences of architecture have been imagined," and that it was Laugier's hypothesis which showed the academic world of the 18th century that classical architecture was of a natural evolution and a development from rational, functional structuring.[2] Laugier's hypothesis also aligned itself seamlessly with the well-established words of Vitruvius, the ancient military engineer who lived towards the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the empire under the reign of Augustus, whose treatise *De Architectura* from the years just before the turn of the millennium is considered the fundamental handbook of classical architecture. In it, according to Summerson, Vitruvius had also asserted that the Doric order – that which is recognized as being the earliest of all classical pillar types (and which is manifestly the simplest) – was indeed of a wooden origin.[3]

From this point onward in time, and as Summerson explains, these original archaic wooden structures – a great many of which would have been dedicated to the Indo-European deities of old – gradually developed into stone temples through the act of being copied over and over again throughout time, continually so until the stone iterations became the static and accepted formula.[4]

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[2] Summerson, John. *The Classical Language of Architecture.* Rev. and enl. ed. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980. 91-92.
[3] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 13.
[4] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture.* 14.

Just as many cities today still have their older cathedrals and churches as their most revered and impressive architectural structures, so too would distant and primitive societies have had their temples of worship as the finest crafted of all of their society's buildings. As these became the most beautiful and well-made with time, they also set the standard for what could be achieved, and for what later became expected. As additional proof of this development, it has been stated that "up until the first century AD, ancient thatched temples were reverently preserved in both Athens and Rome," and should this be true, then it would seem that the Greeks and Romans themselves too knew exactly where and how this beloved style of theirs came about – again in agreement with the statement of the ancient master Vitruvius.[5] But now that we have acknowledged the developmental origins of classical architecture, we must answer why – and how – it became so widespread. This will in turn also reveal to us why its look became so irreversibly tied with prestige and power, the appearances and associations of which are still imitated and idolized today.

1.2: The Greeks

Contrary to any ideas or beliefs that it may have spread naturally throughout the ancient world in the very same way that it was developed – with that being through organic and gradual means – classical architecture, following its initial spread throughout the Greek world, received its dissemination, as well as its associations with prestige, power, and civility, through ancient imperialism. In particular, the military campaigns of Alexander the Great are at the heart of why classical architecture has its associations. In the third century BC, the early northern Greek Kingdom of Macedon, ruled by a young Alexander, swiftly conquered the entirety of what was then the Achaemenid Persian Empire, which at its own apex had long been the biggest and most formidable imperial power. By consuming this foremost power and by campaigning further beyond it, Alexander and his armies created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, extending from the Adriatic Sea down to Egypt and as far east as the Indus River Valley. Indirectly through the establishment of this colossal but short-lived empire, Alexander and his forces brought about the highly influential shift to Hellenistic hegemony, from which the Ancient Greek language and culture became revered and highly respected throughout the ancient world.

The 'might is right' logic of ancient thinking is quite straightforward and simple, and it is the reason that classical architecture gained its laureled reputation. Simply put, if the Greeks were so talented and skilled as to conquer the most formidable empire of the world at that time (that of the Persians), then there could be no doubt that they were truly the very best amongst all others – other

[5] Adam, Robert. *Classical Architecture: A Comprehensive Handbook to the Tradition of Classical Style*. New York NY: Harry N. Abrams, 1991. 2.

cultures and other comparably lesser powers. Essentially, what subsequently occurred was the phenomenon of imitating the highest and most recognized culture not only to appear powerful, but perhaps also as an attempt by others to channel what power that dominant group had. Because of this acknowledgement that Hellenistic culture was superior, classical architecture – the look of Greek cities – became greatly idolized throughout the many lands which composed Alexander's massive and unchallenged domain. Even after his sudden and premature death, Alexander's generals violently divided his empire amongst themselves and established a handful of smaller domains as their own which continued to uphold this Hellenistic hegemony in the ancient world. The city of Alexandria in Egypt, for example, established in 331 BC by Alexander himself and retained under the domain of his former general Ptolemy thereafter, remained a shining bastion of Hellenistic culture well up until the suicide of Cleopatra in 30 BC.[6] With the death of this final heiress of the Ptolemaic dynasty almost exactly three hundred years after the establishment of the regional capital, along with its subsequent capture, the Hellenistic era was ushered out as the Roman period of hegemony began.

1.3: The Romans

Continuing with this aforementioned trend of imitation in ancient power politics, the Romans became the next torch-bearing proponents of Hellenistic culture, although they appropriated and Latinized many elements of it. But even well before the Romans had acquired their unchallenged position as the masters of the Mediterranean, they had long been strong and dedicated admirers of Hellenistic culture. This was not due solely to Rome witnessing the highly impressive military successes of Alexander the Great in the centuries prior, although that did certainly greatly influence the Romans, but this was also because of the older connections between the Italian Peninsula and the various archipelagic states that compromised the Ancient Greek world. During and following the Greek golden age, which is typically dated between 500 and 300 BC (right before the rise of Alexander, which is differentiated as being the Hellenistic period for the reasons of it extending much further beyond the borders of the traditional Greek world), numerous Greek settler colonial projects from the many city states and powers of Greece spread all throughout the Mediterranean area, with several of those settler voyages landing in Southern Italy and Sicily.[7] These settlement projects were so extensive that these regions were even dubbed as being *Magna Graecia* in Latin.[8] Although many of the smaller settlement attempts faded into obscurity, some few have

[6] Boardman, John, Simon Hornblower, D. M. Lewis, and M. Ostwald. *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume VI, The Fourth Century BC*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 811.
[7] Boardman, John, and N. G. L. Hammond. *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume III, Part 3*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. 94.
[8] Ibid.

remained today as prominent world cites, such as Naples in Italy, which was originally colonized as *Neapolis*, meaning 'the new city' in Greek, the earliest archaeological finds of which are dated from between 650-625 BC.[9] Even further west upon the southern shores of Gaul lay the Greek city state of *Massalia*, which was founded around 600 BC and which remained independently Hellenistic until it was taken over by the legions of Julius Caesar towards the end of the (in)famous Gallic Wars, shortly before he lead his men back over the Rubicon to march on Rome.[10] Still reminiscent to its ancient name, this is today's Marseille, one of the largest cities in France. Both of these cities, along with numerous others of Greek origin, became key municipalities of the Roman Empire.

By the dawn of the Hellenistic era, following the Greek golden age, Hellenistic culture had already firmly planted itself in the Italian Peninsula, and thus the influences it had over the early and developing state of Rome were perhaps unparalleled by any other culture. Not only did the Romans consciously start replicating the ways and appearances of the mighty and widely admired Greeks at the time of Alexander and thereafter, but they had already been doing so for quite some time before. In addition to the aforementioned origins of Naples, numerous ruinous sites of Greek origin still exist today in Italy, especially upon its south-eastern fringes closest to the Greek mainland. Perhaps more importantly, however, the Romans were evidently a power which recognized that to emulate cultural Hellenism, and to be Greek – even if not literally – was to be powerful. For the Romans, this went beyond the adoption of just Greek architecture though. The laurel wreath, for example, one of the foremost symbols of Roman imperium – the crown worn by the emperor himself – is a symbol commonly associated with Rome because of the successes and appearances of the many Caesars. Despite this, one can still today see extant ancient coins, pots, and marble statues fashioned to the likenesses of Greek basileis that long predate the rise of Rome.

Let us not forget that the Latin language is also rife with words of Ancient Greek origin. The venerated Graeco-Roman historian Plutarch (c. 46 AD – c. 119 AD) even claimed that Julius Caesar uttered his famous "the die is cast" line in Greek, and many speculations have been made over the centuries that Caesar's final words made famous by William Shakespeare were actually not uttered in Latin, but again instead in Greek.[11] Naturally we will never know the exact truth behind either, let alone any of these scenarios, however, the historiographies are exemplary for the fact that Hellenistic idealism was alive and well during the height of Roman hegemony. Classical architecture too is a language – a less obvious language to the naked eye, but one which the Romans organically

[9] Boardman and Hammond. *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume III, Part 3*. 161.
[10] Edwards, I. E. S., C. J. Gadd, N. G. L. Hammond, and E. Sollberger. *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume II, Part 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975. 754.
[11] Plutarch. *Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men.* Translated by Arthur H. Clough. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1878. 463.

received from the Greeks as aptly demonstrated by Sir John Summerson in his 1965 book *The Classical Language of Architecture*.

By the time Alexandria fell to Rome, which drove the final nail in the coffin for the Hellenistic era, Rome's growing empire had already long since held a serious foothold in mainland Greece, and throughout much of its later imperial history, Greece was an integral region of the Roman power. Although Greeks and Greekness became relegated to something of a second fiddle position under the new Roman and Latinate hegemony, cultural Hellenism had become an ingrained staple of Roman society. This has been the cause of a fair deal of debate and controversy over the ages, with many accusing the Romans of stealing Greek inventions and Greek culture. Naturally, one of the foremost manifestations of that is classical architecture – that which visibly and tangibly states where the Romans had held their power. But to decry Rome for thievery – as perhaps a sort of premodern or ancient example of cultural appropriation – is fallacious to say the least, especially with what this chapter has aimed to demonstrate over the past several paragraphs.

1.4: After Rome

As Roman hegemony then dominated the Mediterranean world and beyond for centuries on end, many of the nations that evolved out of it after its collapse saw themselves as Roman successor states, either by genuinely being such, or by asserting a sort of de facto claim. Because of the enormous reach and influence held by the Roman Catholic Church in particular for so many of those post-imperial centuries, nations which later formed and which had essentially no contact or connection whatsoever with the former Roman world soon became staunch champions of the 'civilized' Roman mentality. Even far away in Northern Europe several centuries after the Fall of Rome, young kingdoms like Norway, Denmark, and Sweden – the likes of which previously had extremely limited contact with the ancient Mediterranean – soon had Latin as the most powerful language in their realm, which came with the spread and acceptance of Rome's Christian faith and papal authority.[12] Regal documents and declarations, the highly influential operations of the clergymen, many songs played by the courtly minstrels, and communications with other kingdoms far and near were soon held almost exclusively in Latin, as they were commonly done so across much of the European continent for centuries.[13] In the context of Finland, one such document written under the order of King Birger Magnusson (r. 1290-1318) from 1316, which is the oldest preserved document in Finland and which has been since referred to as *King Birger's Letter of Protection to Womankind in Karelia*, was written in Latin, as opposed to Early Old Swedish, which

[12] Mantello, Frank Anthony Carl, and A. G. Rigg. *Medieval Latin: An Introduction and Bibliographical Guide*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1996. 71-72.
[13] Ibid.

was the vernacular of his realm at that time.[14] Overall, with the Roman way of speaking also came the Roman way of thinking, and with that, the attitudes of what constituted Romanness, despite the now hundreds of years of separation from Ancient Rome in addition to having virtually no pre-existing connections with it.

Following the Swedish Kingdom's medieval expansion(s) into Finland – a process which is typically believed to have started in the 1150s – Swedish hegemony was gradually asserted over what today is Finland. Generations of Swedish settlers from over the course of the high medieval period until the Napoleonic era traversed eastwards across the Baltic Sea and settled in southern and western Finland, bringing with them a great many things, including their originally Roman Catholic belief system, and with it, the mentality of being a properly civilized and legitimate European culture; that which was also simultaneously asserted by the kingdom unto its newly acquired lands and those who inhabited it. Although by great distance, and indirectly to say the least, this is effectively how classical architecture too arrived in Finland, through the cultural conduit of Sweden. This was not at all a linear development, however, especially considering how classical architecture has ebbed and flowed in popularity and desire in Europe throughout the ages. For example, Gothic architecture, a creation of the Middle Ages, has also experienced many phases and eras of admiration and disdain throughout history, and this has been very much the same for classical imitation styles as well.

This is a very short summation of that latter process in particular, but the aim of this chapter was to demonstrate that historically, classical architecture, as a physical manifestation and an idea representing power, has travelled along with power, and that it has either been asserted upon a people or consciously adopted by them in order to represent being powerful and civilized as an act of imitating the dominant culture. Through the latter process, cultures have embraced classical architecture to represent that they are one in the same with and of the same frame of mind as the venerated Mediterranean ancients. It is a statement that they have acknowledged, inherited, and assumed the same ways of thinking as the successful ancients of the Mediterranean world, who have so greatly (even if inadvertently) influenced and established the core of European culture.

[14] The National Archives of Finland. "Finland's oldest document turns 700 years old on 1 October 2016." News. Article published September 26th 2016. https://arkisto.fi/news/1796/3728/Finlands-oldest-document-turns-700-years-old-on-1-October-2016/d,ajankohtaista-en.

Chapter 2: Sveaborg – The Gibraltar of the North

"*Sveaborg is a monument of cultural history, a goldmine for all those wishing to study the cultural situation of Finland and Sweden in the 18th century."*[15]

- C. J. Gardberg, former State Archaeologist of Finland

Sveaborg, as it was originally declared and as it is still known today by Finland's Swedish-speaking community, has been given many names, both official and unofficial, since it was founded in 1742. Its present name, and that which it is perhaps best known as – Suomenlinna – is both a derivative and an alteration from its former Swedish appellation, with this version directly announcing Finnish ownership over the site, as the name translates best to 'Finland's Castle/Fortress.' Sveaborg, on the other hand, is essentially the same name although it refers to Sweden, and specifically to the historic region of Svealand, which the name of Sweden itself ultimately derives from. Viapori, a Fennicization of 'Sveaborg', was another common name for the stronghold, predominantly used throughout the nineteenth century and until 1918 when the site came under the command of the independent Republic of Finland.[16]

Regardless of name, however, the structure was the largest European construction project of the eighteenth century, and its moniker "the Gibraltar of the North" was first recorded toward the end of that same century.[17] This unofficial title emphasizes the fortress's stature well to those who have a knowledge of European military history, along with the great levels of prestige associated with Gibraltar, a key strategic possession which has been in British hands for now over three centuries and which has survived numerous significant battles and sieges throughout its time. But aside from this association and within Suomenlinna's now antiquated yet still impressive towering stone walls lay some of Helsinki's oldest structures, along with the earliest (surviving) seminal iterations and origins of Helsinki's relationship with classical architecture. Specifically, the site's

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[15] Hällström, Olof af. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna: The Island Fortress off Helsinki: Linnoituksen Rakennushistoria = Fästningens Byggnadshistoria = an Architectural History*. Rungsted: Anders Nyborg A/S, 1986. 5.

[16] Ibid, 9. ; Hällström, Magdalena af, and Minna Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. Helsinki: Ehrensvärd Society, 1998. 210.

[17] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 5. ; Eerikäinen, Liisa and Helena Rosén. *The Suomenlinna Museum Guide.* Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Antiquities, 2005. 19.
[Fascinatingly, Sveaborg is recorded as being first observed in likeness to Gibraltar in 1782 by none other than the young John Quincy Adams, who would later go on to become famous in his own right as the sixth President of the United States of America, as well as the first President to be the son of another former President. Adams and his escort, an Italian Count named Ostario de Greio, were headed to St. Petersburg at the time, in order for the young American to take up a diplomatic post there on behalf of his country.]

Great Courtyard, along with the Ehrensvärd monument centrally within it, make for some of the fortress' most aesthetically impressive and historically important structures in regards to classicism.

2.1: Backdrop – Approaching mid-18th century Sweden

Around the middle of the early modern era, which is typically framed as being between the years of 1500 and 1799, the Kingdom of Sweden had developed into a significant European power, the likes of which had even gone unmatched for several decades following the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648. This rising power's time of dominance would not last all too long though, seeing its apex already shortly after at the beginning in the 18th century. Another rising nation became its primary challenger and rival for quite some time thereafter. The Russian Empire, spearheaded by Peter 'the Great' Romanov, subdued its competitor of Sweden irreversibly through the events of the Great Northern War (1700-1721), from which it then took up the position as the dominant power of Northern Europe. Following the end of this conflict, which was disastrous for Sweden and in particular for the Swedish kingdom's eastern half – today's Finland – Sweden never truly recovered as a power, and the coffin of its would-be empire was beginning to be nailed shut. By 1741, the two powers were again warring with one another through a briefer peripheral northern theatre of the larger War of Austrian Succession – one of Europe's most significant conflicts from over the course of the 18th century, which involved numerous great nations.

At the same time, and despite all of the ongoing chaos, major architectural developments were taking form in Western Europe as well, coming in full swing with the concurrently blossoming Enlightenment movement. Just over a decade prior to the publishing of Laugier's treatise (first published in 1753, with an expanded second edition released soon after in 1755), European architects had begun making inventive plans for a new branch of classical design – neoclassical architecture. The first iterations of this new style can be traced back to the work of architects at the French Academy in Rome in 1740, who based their designs on the ancient and dilapidated structures which surrounded them.[18] By 1754, the famous and highly influential Prussian art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann had pioneered a ground-breaking movement to specifically reintroduce Ancient Greek stylization to the forefront of European high culture.[19] Given the outward appearances we commonly associate with what defines neoclassical style, there can simply be no doubt that Winckelmann's movement was met with excellent success. Soon after, this new and fashionable neoclassical style, accompanied with a greater general interest in the Hellenistic and Roman high periods, swept across Europe, and through the conduit of colonialism, to

[18] Adam. *Classical Architecture: A Comprehensive Handbook to the Tradition of Classical Style*. 36.
[19] Ibid.

many other reaches of world to the European overseas colonies. With the continuing expansions of these relatively new great empires, now spreading far across the oceans, perhaps there was reason to believe that a new and reinvented phase of classical architecture was indeed fitting for the time. Being a middle power at the time, Sweden was one of the European nations to consciously adopt this new trend of neoclassicism. It was through Sweden proper that the style flowed into what is now Finland as well.

2.2: Conceptions and Intentions

This is where we start not only Sveaborg's story, but also that of modern Helsinki. Having only been a small settlement of around 1500 inhabitants by the beginning of Sveaborg's construction, Helsingfors (as it was known back then and as it remains still today for Swedish-speaking Finns) had slowly grown to this approximated size since its founding two centuries prior, having experienced several times of struggle and toil along the way.[20] Additionally, with the recent establishment of Peter the Great's new capital of St. Petersburg, emblematic of Russia's increasing interest in the Baltic Sea area, Sweden had reason to worry for the power and position of its realm. Sweden had also failed to recover Vyborg (Viipuri) after declaring war on the Russian Empire in July of 1741, then surrendering to and accepting a Russian victory two years later, which also resulted in the loss of Fredrikshamn (Hamina).[21] With these significant territorial losses which were continuously pushing the Russo-Swedish border further west, Sweden found itself in an increasingly threatened position, and in need of yet another fortified stronghold. Helsingfors gradually came to be the next most prominent frontier settlement for Sweden's increasingly precarious kingdom.

Having sided with the powerful Kingdom of France for the aforementioned succession war, Sweden approached its ally and was no doubt pleased to hear that the French were indeed interested in supporting the enormous project which had been conceived and proposed. As France had long been one of Europe's biggest and most formidable kingdoms by the mid-1700s, it had surely acquired the ability to see a rising threat on the horizon. In order to help its smaller Nordic ally, as well as to keep a check on the balance of power and status quo in European power politics, the French financed the lion's share of Sveaborg's construction, sending Sweden nine barrels of gold per annum.[22] The task to oversee the building of this grand stronghold was assigned to a Swedish artillery officer named Augustin Ehrensvärd, and this relegation was well chosen as Ehrensvärd was not only a formerly well-travelled student learned in the arts of war, but he had also closely studied

[20] Eerikäinen and Rosén. *The Suomenlinna Museum Guide.* 9.
[21] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 159.
[22] Ibid.

the expert works of Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban (1633-1707), the famed French military engineer who had devised many highly influential design concepts for fortresses.[23]

Essentially, the primary plan for building the enormous fortress of Sveaborg (aside from its obvious practical purposes as an incredibly well-protected defensive structure) was not just to make a stronghold formidable enough to intimidate the Russian Empire, or perhaps just to make the Russians second-guess their own ability to take Finland, but by building Sveaborg the Kingdom of Sweden was also expressing to its eastern subjects that it did indeed care about them, and that the realm intended to keep the land as Swedish indefinitely. Furthermore, by its sheer mass alone, Sveaborg was also a statement as bold as its size – one that said the Kingdom of Sweden is mighty, prepared, and a force to be reckoned with. Its given name is also an article of interest. Sveaborg, translating into English as either "the Swedish castle" or "the castle of the Swedes," in itself is certainly a statement – one which says that this is indeed where Sweden ends, and additionally, that this is incontrovertibly Swedish land. Paired with Gothenburg on the furthest-west edges of the realm (and/or perhaps even with France's Canadian stronghold of Louisbourg even further west across the Atlantic, as suggested by historian Olof af Hällström), this choice of name was likely a remark being made to Russia, and this makes sense especially considering the former loss of Vyborg – yet another city sharing the same Swedish-language suffix – when the names are considered alongside the history of what had occurred.[24] Another reason the name Sveaborg was aptly chosen was because the stronghold lived up to its title, as it became the largest and most formidable fortress throughout the entire Swedish realm.[25]

As is evident to any who have taken the ferry ride across from the Helsinki Market Square to reach the island, Sveaborg is a truly enormous and impressive sight to behold. The original plans for the island, however – rather, the group of islands that comprise the fortress – were far more ambitious. For example, Hällström stated that "the most extensive and remarkable sub-plan for Sveaborg" was the intent to have one of the islands, Väster Svartö (Länsi-Mustasaari in Finnish), "built as an enclosed fortress and that the buildings inside the fortress would be grouped as to form four enclosed courtyards in a row."[26] Although this particular plan never came into fruition, Sveaborg was still given several courtyards all throughout its islands, as these were very much the

[23] Gardberg, Carl Jacob. "Ehrensvärd, Augustin." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=578. ; Eerikäinen and Rosén. *The Suomenlinna Museum Guide*. 15.
[24] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 160.
[25] Screen, John E. O. *The Army in Finland During the Last Decades of Swedish Rule: 1770-1809*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2007. 21.
[26] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 164.

sought-after expression of architectural excellence during the Baroque period – this will be touched upon again in the third chapter of this thesis.

2.3: Neoclassicism within the walls of Sveaborg

As a strong example of mid-18th century state of the art construction capabilities, and as the political statement it was dually constructed to be in addition to all of the practical and functional services it would provide, Sveaborg was appropriately fitted with neoclassical structures, the likes of which had contemporaneously emerged to the forefront of European high culture at the same time the idea for the fortress was conceived. Unsurprisingly, the neoclassical architecture present at Sveaborg was designed with France in mind, due not only to the project being greatly financed by France along with the Franco-Swedish alliance, but also independent of those direct connections, due to 18th-century France's powerful cultural sphere of influence across Europe. Several of these neoclassical features within and upon the walls of the stronghold are rather subtle though, unlike what one typically thinks of in regards to French neoclassicism, but some elements are particularly pronounced. Many also no longer exist, as some were torn down due to their impracticalities or from their clashes with later designs, while others were destroyed from bombardment. What remains as the most pronounced neoclassical part of the fortress still today, just as it was upon the day of its completion in 1807, is the Great Courtyard area along with its cynosure, the Ehrensvärd monument.

As pointed out by af Hällström in his book *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna: The Island Fortress off Helsinki,* the Great Courtyard is a square, and it is also "the oldest monumental square in Finland" – an important topic which this thesis will return to in Chapter 3.[27] Additionally, given by the dates he listed, the buildings which form the Great Courtyard date from the 1750s and 1760s, which make them some of the city of Helsinki's oldest (neoclassical) structures.[28] af Hällström further stated that this square's construction and composition thus introduced the principles of the (end of the) Baroque era to Finland, given that such squares were incredibly popular in European high culture design throughout that epoch.[29] But in a militaristic sense, a square is far more than just a space for civilian gatherings or a mark for the centre of the local area. For a military, a square is a place to display the talents of a unit and those within it, and through that, a square is where the realm's prestige and power are represented.

[27] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna*. 167.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

In Sveaborg's case, this display of prestige and power was serviced doubly by the neoclassical buildings which surround(ed) this square, given that this height of fashion design style was implemented not only because it was the most sought after architectural style at the time, but also because of the function it would serve in showing that the fortress was as up-to-date with the high culture of Europe as it was impressive in terms of its massive size alone. In addition to linking the site with the cultural capitals of Europe more broadly, having neoclassical buildings also linked Sveaborg more directly with the Swedish motherland, and in particular with the capital of Stockholm, a city which is still today famous for its many 18th-century neoclassical buildings. This makes further sense given that Sveaborg also served as the conduit from which both Swedish and European high culture passed through into the burgeoning Helsinki, as the upper-class officers of the Swedish military stationed at the fortress along with their families were the primary upholders and proponents of these ways. "Its culture was a natural continuation of that of Stockholm," Laura Kolbe and Matti Klinge stated in their book *Helsinki: Daughter of the Baltic*, further commenting that the archipelagic fortress was often host to masquerade balls, novels, and musical soirées, in addition to having a presence of Freemasonry.[30] To match the outer appearances of the buildings, French was commonly and fashionably spoken by the fortress' high-ranking residents, who also practiced French social customs to keep up with appearances, and who in their downtime regularly discussed the philosophies of Enlightenment Era thinkers such as Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau.[31]

[30] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 21.
[31] Eerikäinen and Rosén. *The Suomenlinna Museum Guide.* 48.

Above: This photograph of the Ehrensvärd monument, along with the pale golden "Commandant's Lodge" behind it, was taken by myself in December of 2019, as I stood facing southwards. The building was originally twice its current size, however, it was badly damaged due to the massive Anglo-French bombardment which took place upon the fortress in 1855 during the Crimean War.[32] The adjoined twin wing sat where the path and greenery (on the right side of the photograph) now currently sit. According to historian Rainer Knapas, the inscription upon the side of the monument was directly inspired by the stylizations of French classicism, as it states who is interred along with biographical information about them, it describes who erected the monument, and when they did so.[33]

Below: The other end of the Great Courtyard, facing west. The Ehrensvärd monument sits just out of frame to the left, and the ochre-coloured building which sits behind it is one of the later additions to the site, built in 1880 under Russian supervision. This "dwelling house", as Hällström calls it, was designed in the empire style of neoclassicism, and was constructed after one of the bastion walls which was situated there formerly was torn down.[34] Hällström also noted that this curved beige building, along with its now missing twin, was the corps de garde.[35] Image cropped from its original source to better fit this page.

By this point, and after seeing the buildings which surround the Great Courtyard, especially the two original structures (as opposed to the aforementioned Russian addition of 1880, which is partially visible in the above image), one may be asking oneself 'what, exactly, makes these buildings neoclassical?' This is a fair question, given that they are not at all pronouncedly neoclassical, let alone manifestly classical by their outer designs, especially since there are no obvious features upon them such as pillars, pilasters, porticos, pediments or friezes. Considering what one typically expects of neoclassicism, these structures are comparatively remarkably plain, with far less ostentatious ornamentation. The pale golden Commandant's Lodge building is especially difficult to decipher, due to its large and bold bottom half formed from thick stone. Despite their subtleties, however, there are some ways in which we can identify and confirm these buildings to be neoclassical, aside from simply just saying that they are due to when they were constructed. In particular, there are two features we can examine to determine these buildings as neoclassical.

[32] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 149.
[33] Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 52.
[34] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 152.
[35] Ibid, 167.

Firstly, and as af Hällström specifically noted in his book when he was discussing the elements of the Commandant's Lodge, the slopes of the roofs of these (original) buildings are "remarkably low," which is typical of mid-18th century neoclassicism.[36] Secondly, and visibly, both the pale gold and beige stuccoed buildings have been fitted with off-white cornices below their notably low rooftops. Cornices such as these seen here are purely aesthetic key elements which make the statement of classicism, not only as they have been and can be seen on so many classical and neoclassical constructions of both the ancient and modern worlds, but because their lined mouldings also strongly replicate and evoke the appearances which are typically seen at the tops of the pillared orders that we so commonly see on larger classical and neoclassical structures – features which are recognizable and typical of classicism. By the suggestions and statements made by the cornices on these buildings, we can see that they are not only being represented as the structures and creations of an empire, but also by a great distance they are evoking Graeco-Roman antiquity, which is intrinsically what all post-antiquity classical structures seek to do.

More than the subtler buildings which surround it, the Ehrensvärd monument may very well be the most pronounced neoclassical structure of old Sveaborg and of present-day Suomenlinna. It is not a building per se, however this later addition was deliberately designed (at a later time) to complement the Great Courtyard as its centrepiece and focal point. Its appearance is unmistakable with its message. More than just simply honouring Augustin Ehrensvärd for his significance and mastery of architecture and military leadership, this monument (which also serves as his gravestone) boldly states that he was a warrior and statesman of ancient and highly influential – or perhaps even of mythological – proportions. With the Corinthian helmet emblazoned upon his grave in a most pronounced and visible way – one which is far more apparent as to what it is, along with what it symbolizes, perhaps more than any other article of the statue – we are essentially being told that Ehrensvärd is comparable to an Ancient Greek nobleman warrior like Thucydides, Themistocles, or Pericles. The likenesses of these men and others like them were commonly characterized by ancient sculptors as wearing the exact same style of helmet, which has become an ingrained visual element of what we imagine Ancient Greek warriors to have always worn. Regarding the previous statements of a potential mythological likeness – the idea which further solidifies how revered and respected Ehrensvärd was, and how embellished his character was made to be through the statement being made with his tomb – the very same helmet style can be seen on numerous original Ancient Greek black-figure pottery works from antiquity, many of which feature mythological tales and their respective protagonists upon them.

[36] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 168.

Above: A bust of Themistocles, one of the most venerated and important Ancient Athenian generals and statesmen from the classical era. A praised hero of the Battle of Marathon and a strong advocate for the maintenance of Athenian naval superiority, Themistocles remains today as one of Ancient Greece's most celebrated leaders. Given these traits and interests, it would not at all be out of line to compare Augustin Ehrensvärd more directly to such a person, even though Ehrensvärd's tomb is evidently of a more broad and general unspecific likeness to Ancient Greek warriors and leaders.

Below: A cropped photo of one of the famous Ancient Greek black-figure amphorae. This creation is from approximately 530 BC and was uncovered from present-day Tuscany, featuring the mythological heroes of Achilles and Ajax playing a board game from antiquity. Both figures can be seen donning archetypal and so-called Corinthian helmets. Image cropped from its original source to better fit this page.

It cannot be said with any certainty that the Ehrensvärd monument was deliberately designed to connect its hero with figures from Ancient Greek mythology, let alone with any of the historical figures in particular. Were the intentions of the sculptors and designers minds known to us in this specific regard, it is very likely that af Hällström would have mentioned such ideas in his book,

given how incredibly thorough and detailed it is regarding so many other features of the fortress's inner and outer designs along with the intents behind them. That being said, the likenesses which are clearly visible to us strongly suggest that Ehrensvärd should be as revered as those ancient leaders were, and that he is their equivalent for his own time and place of eighteenth-century Sweden. Seija Linnanmäki, a former curator of the Finnish National Board of Antiquities, wrote in her chapter of *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden* (i.e. 'the present and posterity' in English) that it is possible that Tobias Sergel, the illustrious 18th-century Swedish sculptor who was brought in for the project by King Gustav III himself, sought to evoke Mars (Ares) or even Minerva (Athena) with this design, in addition to likening Ehrensvärd with the historical Athenian statesman Pericles.[37] Linnanmäki made this assessment because King Gustav III, Carl August Ehrensvärd, Jean Eric Rehn, and Sergel, the four minds behind the monument, were all well-known admirers of Graeco-Roman antiquity.[38] In fact the four of them had all spent time in Rome and were well-versed in classical stylization, especially Sergel, who lived and worked there for eleven years from 1767-1778.[39]

Unsurprisingly, and in addition to all of the monument's discernibly Greek stylizations, there are also identifiably Roman elements present as well. af Hällström stated that the ends of the ship which appears to be protruding through the tomb are in fact Roman (as opposed to being Greek by design).[40] Linnanmäki, however, stated that Carl August Ehrensvärd, the son of the deceased field marshal, only ever sought to have ship elements of an "antique form" in his instructions, and that Sergel's final product – that which can be seen upon the monument still today – was stylized in reference to Hellenic galleys as well as the kinds of vessels which were built at Sveaborg.[41] Should af Hällström's assessment be the more accurate of the two, then the symbolism and message being emitted with these Roman elements of the monument is likely that, in the case of Ehrensvärd being comparable to the revered Southern European ancients, so too is the Baltic Sea his Mare Nostrum – it is Ehrensvärd's Mediterranean Sea, and the Swedish Royal Navy is thus suggested to be its true and proper master. Ultimately it matters not which assessment is more correct though, given that Ancient Greece and Rome both have significant and decorated naval histories. In addition to this, the Corinthian helmet atop the grave is noticeably facing eastwards in alignment with the bow of the would-be ship. This may be coincidental, however, given the highly deliberate design of this monument overall, one is within all rights to propose there is a message here too. That message

[37] Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 78.
[38] Ibid, 82.
[39] Ibid, 86.
[40] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 168.
[41] Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 83.

would be that, even in death, Ehrensvärd is steadfast. Linnanmäki believes this placement is no coincidence, as this positioning also faces the helmet towards both Russia and the sunrise.[42]

Notably, and unlike the unmistakably Greek helmet, the sword and shield beneath it both appear at first glance to be rather generic. In his book, af Hällström only commented that this pairing of weaponry merely appears to be "made after antique models," but Linnanmäki has written that the shield, which also has the Ehrensvärd family crest emblazoned upon it, actually takes its shape from Roman cavalry shields used between the third and second centuries BC.[43] The blade is neither reminiscent of a typical Roman gladius nor of a distinctly shaped Ancient Greek *kopis,* but Linnanmäki has further written that it does remind one of the Swedish kingdom's Royal Order of the Sword, of which Ehrensvärd was a recipient.[44] She also suggested that its placement on top of the shield, as opposed to it being tucked behind, was deliberately done to emphasize the latter element of Ehrensvärd's surname, given that 'svärd' is the Swedish word for sword.[45] Relatively, there are also three youthful angelic faces emblazoned upon the front of the shield and before the Corinthian helmet. These could easily be mistaken for decorative cherubs, the depictions of which were commonly featured in 18th-century rococo artworks, but these upon the Ehrensvärd monument shield are actually seraphs. Similarly to the sword in regards to Linnanmäki's analysis of its presence, the seraphs were included upon this monument to display that Ehrensvärd was in fact a knight of the Royal Order of the Seraphim (the crested cross of which is situated just below the middle seraph), which is still today the highest attainable distinction offered by the Kingdom of Sweden.[46]

One key aspect to consider when addressing the appearance and implementation, along with the greater statement being made of the Ehrensvärd monument, was its build and design team. In addition to all of the notable 18th-century Swedish names which went into the construction and moulding of this statue, one stands above the rest as its most important – King Gustav III. Only three days after Ehrensvärd died in the autumn of 1772, Gustav III came up with the idea that the field marshal should be interred in the centre of Sveaborg's Great Courtyard.[47] Additionally, it was "by Gustav III's order and sketch the stone was set up in 1788," and prior to that he "…himself laid in the keystone of the burial vault" in July of 1783 – already over a decade after Ehrensvärd's death.[48] Fundamentally, it was he who decided that this would become one of the most visually impressive

[42] Ibid, 85.
[43] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 168. ; Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 76.
[44] Ibid, 79.
[45] Ibid, 75.
[46] Ibid, 80-81.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 168.

and prestigious courtyards from throughout the entire Kingdom of Sweden.[49] Having such a spectacle was certainly also a reflection on him, not only because he was instrumental for its implementation and designing, but because this impressive construct (within another already impressive construct) was within his kingdom.

The crowning statue elements were only fixed into place in the autumn of 1807 under the oversight of the king's son and successor, Gustav IV Adolf.[50] The bronze which was used has a dramatic and interesting history of its own, as it was forged from melted-down Russian cannons which had been captured as trophies at the Second Battle of Svensksund in 1790, which was Sweden's greatest victory of the Russo-Swedish War of 1788-1790.[51] For those who know the Finland's history well and what occurred thereafter, the autumn of 1807 was intriguing and fitting timing for the monument to be completed. This was the last addition to the enormous and highly protective superstructure of Sveaborg, yet less than a year later, the fortress and its army would capitulate, making for one of the most important watershed moments in Finnish history, as well as one of the most disastrous and humiliating defeats in Swedish military history. To paraphrase af Hällström, both contemporaries and historians today are still perplexed by the stark difference between the forty years of work which went into building this fortress, and the mere three weeks of its besiegement and defeat.[52]

Above: A closer view of the Ehrensvärd monument, with the now oxidized bronze statue which was only put in its place the autumn before the Siege of Sveaborg began in the winter/spring of 1808. This was the final physical structure the Swedish Kingdom commissioned for the fortress. The sword and shield beneath the helmet are reminiscent of neither Greek nor Roman origins, although the large helmet,

[49] Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 52.
[50] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 168.
[51] Hällström, M., and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 84.
[52] Ibid, 146.

which makes the loudest statement, is unmistakably Hellenistic. This sculpture's eclectic mix of ancient and enlightenment-era features is also fittingly representative for neoclassicism more broadly, given that neoclassicism is exactly that in essence: the merging older and newer appearances of imperialism into one finite style of its own. Photo uploaded November 2nd 2006 and accessed from the Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ehrensv%C3%A4rd%27s_Grave.JPG.

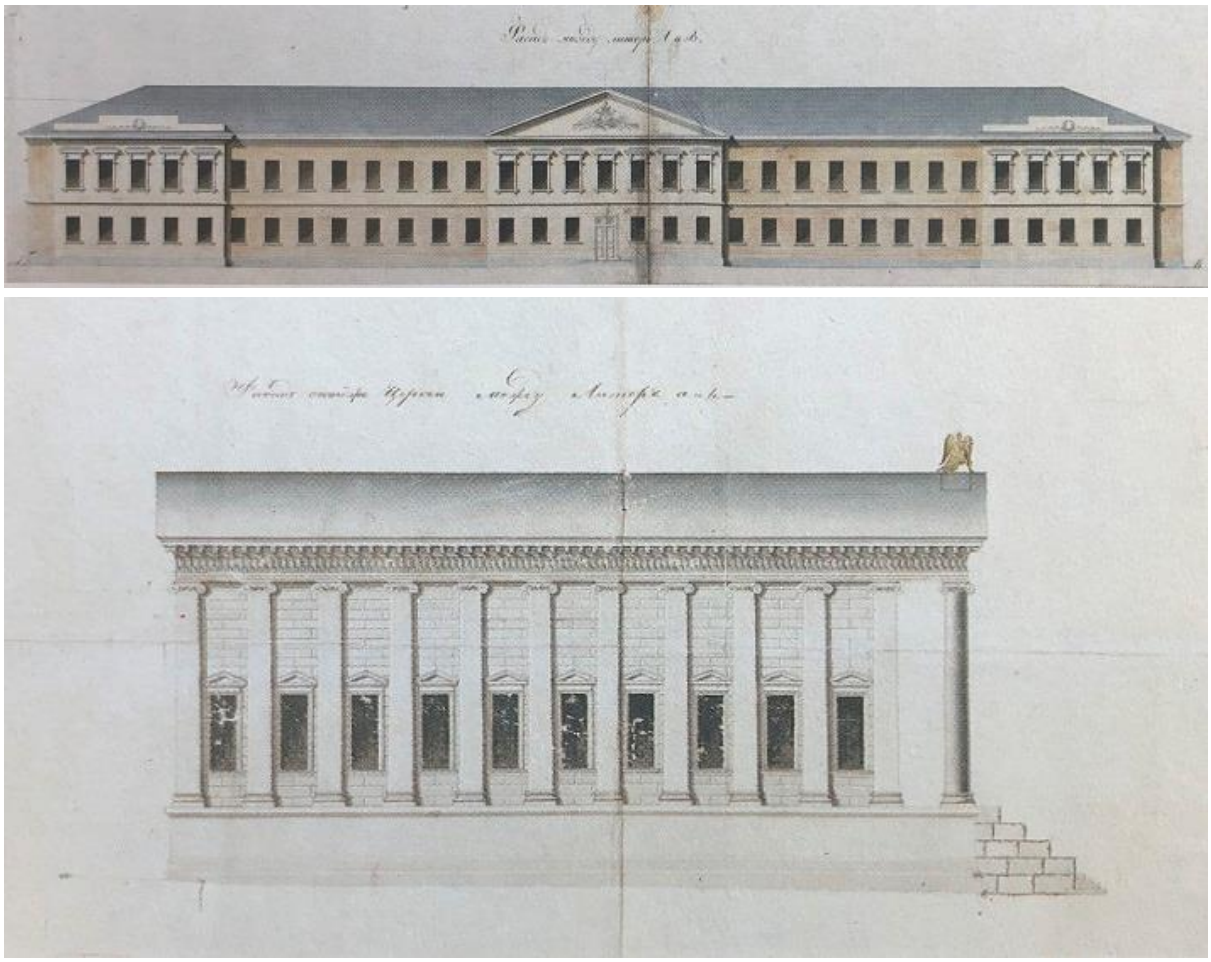
In summation, all of these Swedish neoclassical constructs within the walls of Sveaborg prove that the site was built as far more than just a tactical garrison, albeit a titan by size at that. In addition to all of its defensive capabilities and functions, Sveaborg was constructed both inside and out as a statement of Swedish military, cultural, and national excellence, the inside of which reinforced this message through the means of having fashionable neoclassical architecture. This notion is and was especially reinforced by the Ehrensvärd's monument, which was deliberately designed to symbolize both Ehrensvärd himself and the nation overall as being akin to an ancient Mediterranean power in terms of its might and reputation. What is integral to keep in mind, however, was that this was a statement being made by an already weakened and declining would-be empire. Only two years after the completion of this monument which demanded so much respect – the final piece of construction of the entire fortress under Swedish authority – both this stronghold and the eastern half of the realm, today's Finland, were completely and irreversibly lost to the Russian Empire. Onwards from 1809, the eastern border of Sweden was folded back to its modern national borders, and the nation assumed its position as a lesser and comparatively insignificant European power. In Sweden's case, implementing neoclassical design in young Helsinki was a hollow gesture meant to bolster the renown of the realm – to show that the crown and its military were legitimate forces to be reckoned with. But when it came down to battles and war, the very things which kingdoms and empires build and maintain themselves with, Sweden had little to show for all it had stated with its ornate architectural constructs.

2.4: Russian Renovations

After the Russian Empire defeated Sweden in The Finnish War (1808-1809), what is now Finland was legally exchanged between the two nations, with the eastern empire establishing the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland with Emperor Alexander I as its Grand Duke. Naturally this also meant that mighty Sveaborg had become the newest defensive outpost for the Russian military. Having bombarded the site somewhat during their siege of it in the springtime of 1808, the fortress was in need of some repair, but not much, given that the siege was relatively uneventful. Instead, the Russian efforts and intentions to expand the interior functions and offerings of Sveaborg closely mirrored those of the Swedes before them, seeking to make the site a statement of their prestige and power. Revamping parts of Sveaborg by designing newer, more elaborate structures within the walls of the fortress would also allow the Russians to assert a further sense of ownership, both over the archipelagic site itself, and over the growing municipality of Helsingfors across the bay.

The efforts to further embellish Sveaborg's inner architectural appearances under Imperial Russian supervision were tasked to Carl Ludwig Engel, the Prussian-born architect who impressively simultaneously also designed the imperial assembly of buildings which would form the bold and celebrated Senate Square (see Chapter 3), and who would eventually go on to give "…the whole of Finland a new outward appearance."[53] Born and raised in late 18th-century Berlin, Engel had grown up surrounded by some of Europe's finest examples of classical buildings and classically-inspired designs. He also graduated from the Berlin Bauakademie and worked for the Prussian government's building administration prior to the Battle of Jena in October of 1806, which forced architects such as himself to seek employment elsewhere.[54] Under the employ of the Russians, Engel naturally also sought to tie into his work a significant amount of neoclassicism inspired from St. Petersburg, which was itself only around a century old by the time Engel began his work for the Russian Empire, and which much like Helsinki, was a city deliberately designed with particular social and political motivations in mind. Having been modelled heavily after the greater cities of Western Europe, with its very name aptly and microcosmically representing its idealized westernness by Peter the Great's decision to have said name ending with a German(ic) suffix despite it being a solely and properly Russian city by origin and establishment, the classical architecture of this new Russian capital had drawn its own inspirations from a variety of sources. In particular, its eclectic classical assortment was reflective of the architects who were originally brought in to build the city, with their nationalities being Italian, German, and French, and who themselves had been working with Dutch and English trends at the time of the St. Petersburg's construction.[55] Thus the neoclassical proposals put forth by Engel for Russian Sveaborg reflected these influences, just as the Senate Square's designs and realisations did as well, which will be further explored in Chapter 3.

[53] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography.* 26.
[54] Lilius, Henrik. "Engel, Carl Ludwig." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2007. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3213. ; Wickberg, Nils Erik. *Senaatintori = Senatstorget = The Senate Square = Der Senatsplatz: Helsinki-Helsingfors.* Rungsted Kyst: Anders Nyborg A/S, 1981. 122.
[55] Buckler, Julie A. *Mapping St. Petersburg: Imperial Text and Cityshape.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. 32.



Above: These three drawings by Engel are proposals of a church and barracks (1820), a hospital (1828), and the same church from the first image again but from its side (1821) respectively. The church was explicitly designed by Engel to evoke an Ancient Roman temple.[56] These images have been scanned from af Hällström's 1986 book *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna: The Island Fortress off Helsinki*, as seen on pages 80 and 85, and have been further cropped for viewing in this thesis.

As can be seen, Engel's proposals for enhancing the fortress' interior were markedly more elaborate and ornate than the older buildings which remained from the Swedish era. Clear visual imitations of Graeco-Roman stylizations with the pillars, pilasters, pediments, and porticos can be seen on these additionally larger buildings, all of which were aesthetically motivated, and which were undoubtedly designed to represent the might and magnitude of the Russian Empire – one of the powers that had just recently contributed to the downfall of the First French Empire, and which had triumphantly marched into Paris in 1814. In addition to the aforementioned origins and influences of Russian classicism, these proposed edifices and others similar to them were also largely the result of the Napoleonic Wars' cultural influences, with their specific classification within classical architecture being known as the 'empire style.' This particular trend of neoclassicism had spread outward from France, as it was made famous and sought-after by the formidable French Empire of Napoleon Bonaparte. Naturally, given his enormous influence amongst and over other

[56] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 178.

kings and emperors of Europe even after his fall, Napoleon's regime and this newer and more elaborate French 'empire style' now dictated the height of architectural fashion. Additionally, aside from the fact that the more grandiose empire style was simply just the fashionable way of building in the immediate post-Napoleonic period, the presence of these newer, bolder, and more stylistically intricate buildings at Sveaborg would also send and reinforce a clear visual message about the Russian Empire's superiority to the former Swedish owners and builders of the fortress, even if such a message were unintentionally emitted. Such starkly juxtaposed styles, both being classical by origin and classification, and ergo also greatly similar in many ways, would naturally have created something of a visible small-scale competition between the older Swedish buildings from the mid-18th century – those which were built by the inferior power who had lost this impressive fortress they had spent so much time creating – and those of this more powerful regime with newer and sharper neoclassical designs with far more intricacy and grandeur.

With all of that in mind, those who have explored Sveaborg know that these more elaborate plans were never realised, and the same is true for others of similarly ornate designs which were also proposed. A hospital in the empire style somewhat similar to the one seen above was still built throughout the 1820s, as designed by Engel, however it is notably less embellished, lacking both the size of the initial proposal and the pediment with its inner tympanum design along with other purely aesthetic flourishes.[57] The majority of Russian building attention was instead focused almost entirely upon the Senate Square at this point in time, and naturally so, given the priority this space would have demanded in contributing to the renown and glory of the Russian Empire, in addition to its more practical overall necessities for shaping and designing of the emerging city of Helsinki. It was not until the Senate Square was all but completed that attention was shifted back to the fortress, from which it then received its more elaborate Russian buildings of both classical persuasions and of other architectural styles, with the former including those of a newer neoclassical subgenre known as "diverse classicism."[58] By the mid-century, both another larger hospital and a newer officer's pavilion had been built in the empire style, which were joined some decades later by yet another addition – the aforementioned "dwelling house" of the Great Courtyard, which was erected in the 1880s.[59] This period of returned and continued focus also brought the construction of the robust pink artillery barracks built in the diverse classicism style – yet another effort to construct a contemporary height of fashion building at the fortress in order showcase that both the stronghold and the regime which owned it were neither dated nor unrespectable, despite the fact that empire

[57] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 148.
[58] Ibid, 147.
[59] Ibid, 147-148, 152.

style structures (which had been cycled out of the mainstream by the mid-19th century) were also still simultaneously being built both there and across the bay in the Senate Square.

Below: The following image was taken by myself in mid-December of 2019, and is of the recently mentioned artillery barracks built and designed in the style of diverse classicism, which was the mid-19th century trend that succeeded the previous architectural interests in the empire style. Similarly to the older on-site buildings of the Great Courtyard, as built by the Swedes, this Russian construction of almost a century later also has its cornices as its strongest indicator of its classicism. The arched window frames in between the two floors with squared frames are the primary element which makes this building diverse by the standards of its time, given that much of neoclassicism is stringent with the expectations of near-perfect symmetry.

Chapter 3: The Senate Square – The Imperial Heart of Helsinki

As stated previously in the introduction of this thesis, the Senate Square is unquestionably the most recognizable and architecturally revered area in all of Helsinki, and arguably also in all of Finland, given that it has relatively little competition by way of magnitude or architectonic impressiveness. For a time, it was also the most politically important area in the country as well. Although it has since lost some of its governmental importance in modernity, it still today holds a great deal of significance for the functions of both the nation and the city. In addition to all of this, along with its renown and recognisability, both the Senate Square and its immediate surrounding area also double as the home to what is commonly acknowledged as being Finland's most aesthetically impressive assembly of neoclassical structures. Because of their integral positions in regards to the formation of the square along with their considerable sizes, the Main Building of the University of Helsinki along with its non-identical twin across from it, the Senate House (also presently called the Government Palace), and the Helsinki Cathedral are the three primary focuses of this chapter. A selection of other structures with less central importance, but which still by all means contribute to the image and importance of the square, will additionally and briefly be discussed.

3.1: The Grand Duchy of Finland, Ehrenström, and the new Capital City

Following the severance of Sweden from its former eastern half and with the Russian Empire's establishment of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809, the growing town of Helsingfors was selected and elevated to the status of capital in the spring of 1812.[60] There are several reasons this decision was made, with the Russian regime favouring this location over the well-established city of Åbo (Turku), Finland's largest for many centuries with medieval origins and which had long gravitated towards Sweden in the south and west – the latter cardinal direction of which was the exact opposite of where Russia, and chiefly St. Petersburg, was situated.[61] Helsingfors was also seen by the Russian Empire as being conveniently equidistant between the larger cities of Åbo and Vyborg (Viipuri), along with having the formerly discussed excellent defensive and military garrisoning capabilities provided by Sveaborg.[62] Perhaps more importantly than any of these reasons though, the town had also coincidentally suffered from a significant fire in November of 1808, some months after the Siege of Sveaborg and the Russian takeover of Southern Finland.[63] This was also known to

[60] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 121.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

the emperor, who had visited the town and fortress in March of 1809 on his way to Åbo.[64] With all of these factors together, and especially with Alexander I himself having witnessed the town's potential as it was in need of reconstruction anyway, Helsinki's situation was seen as a perfect opportunity to create and establish a new capital of purely Russian oversight and design from this architectural *tabula rasa*.

Emperor Alexander I took an active interest in this redesigning and reconstruction process.[65] This was likely due to the fact that because he was the imperial monarch, he knew that the appearance of this Grand Duchy's new capital – over which he was the Grand Duke – would be seen both domestically within his realm and internationally across Europe as a reflection of his regal power and prestige. During this age of empires, and as it had been throughout so many centuries before, there was essentially always an ongoing competition between the many powers of various styles and sizes regarding who had the greatest and most developed domains, which would thus dictate who influenced the given period's zeitgeist and which regime(s) would command the most respect. The principal idea for the Senate Square as this particular kind of elaborate spatial expression and regal manifestation came from Johan Albrecht Ehrenström, a native of the small town of Helsingfors who had spent the majority of his life as a courtier in Stockholm, but who later moved to the newly-established Grand Duchy of Finland in 1812 to enjoy high-status employment there under the famous Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, an advisor to Alexander I.[66]

Finnish architect and art historian Nils Erik Wickberg has noted that Ehrenström, who received this assignment to conceptualize the new heart of the Grand Duchy's capital, was indeed appointed by his good connection with Armfelt, but that this designation was notably "against his will."[67] In fact, Wickberg stated that Ehrenström referred to his assignment as his "galley-slave's job."[68] Intriguingly, and in a way which may further reflect why he envisioned a central square in particular, despite the aforementioned fact that such Baroque ideals had been ushered away from their former architecturally revered place in European high society, Ehrenström had also been one of the many Swedish military officers of the upper classes garrisoned at Sveaborg in his youth, having spent time posted there as an artillerist like his father before him.[69] Wickberg additionally stated

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[64] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 24.
[65] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 121.
[66] Tyynilä, Markku. "Ehrenström, Johan Albrecht." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=4497. ; Knapas, Rainer. "Armfelt, Gustaf Mauritz." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2007. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=2556.
[67] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 122.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 22. ; Tyynilä, Markku. "Ehrenström, Johan Albrecht." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.

that “all evidence indicates that he drew his inspiration mainly from Gustaf Adolf Square in Stockholm, which he knew well from his stay in that city.”[70] Thus, considering his exposure to the squares within the walls of Sveaborg, and certainly to the central and primary Great Courtyard there, along with his many years spent in downtown Stockholm and his dissatisfaction of having this task assigned to him (which perhaps made him feel all the less inspired to come up with something more ground-breaking and inventive), it is not difficult to imagine why Ehrenström resorted to deciding that it would be a square – a dated item of design fashionable to the bygone Baroque era – as the heart of this new capital city.

Wickberg additionally expressed that Ehrenström can be credited with the outlining of what became the Senate Square in terms of its structural surroundings, as it was he who envisioned the new Finnish capital’s central square being “fringed on three sides by mighty monumental buildings,” and that “the old patrician houses on the south side of the square were allowed to remain, although they were later added to and furnished with new façades so that they formed a uniformed row of buildings.”[71] It is worth noting at this point that Ehrenström’s own uncle, Johan Sederholm, was one of these local magnates, whose home makes up for the south-eastern corner of the Senate Square, which is also Helsinki proper’s verifiably oldest building, and which comes from the same years of construction as the neoclassical Great Courtyard buildings of Sveaborg.[72] It is also said to have been altered, however, it remains in its nearly original form.[73] As can be seen with the so-called Sederholm House, the pre-imperial area of what now constitutes the Senate Square and its immediate neighbourhood was one of neoclassical architecture already prior to the Russian acquisition of Finland. This is further supported by some aquarelle paintings done by Engel circa 1816 before the Senate Square’s radical reconstruction began, in which numerous buildings of the same earlier and subtler neoclassical style can be seen, much like those still present at Sveaborg, made notable by their cornices along with a few pediments visible throughout.

Below: The Sederholm House, which presently houses the Helsinki City Museum, is identifiably the oldest building and the oldest neoclassical building in downtown Helsinki. Although not visible here, the decoration within its pediment reads “J.S.H. 1757” to signify to us both its age and original ownership under Johan Sederholm, uncle of J.A. Ehrenström. Photograph taken by myself October 5th 2018.

[70] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 124.
[71] Ibid*,* 122.
[72] Tyynilä. “Ehrenström, Johan Albrecht.” http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=4497.
[73] Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi: Helsingin Tuomiokirkko 1852-2002 = Helsingfors Pärla : Helsingfors Domkyrka = The Pearl of Helsinki : Helsinki Cathedral.* Helsinki: Projektilehti, 2002. 156.

Below: The two aforementioned aquarelle paintings by Engel, of the original Senate Square area circa 1816 prior to the subsequent teardown and reconstruction. The pre-existing abundance of neoclassical buildings can be seen before almost all of them, save for the Sederholm House, were replaced with newer buildings designed in the empire style, the second movement of neoclassicism. The Russian replacement of these older Swedish buildings, despite their similarity of style as well as their cooperative potentials, as seen with how well the Sederholm House blends in with the rest of the Senate Square, would allow the empire to forge a new sense of character and ownership within the burgeoning settlement, and to disassociate it better from its Swedish origins. Both of these images have been cropped from their original proportions to better fit this page.

Ehrenström, however, perhaps should not be properly credited with contributing to the neoclassical language story of the Senate Square. He may have been the one to envision that a towering cathedral would sit at the square's highest point, but it was Engel who brought in and created the empire-style designs which still dominate the square today, and which make the square what it is far more than the small grey Sederholm House from the mid-18th century.[74] Additionally, assuming that it was Ehrenström's decision to leave the house of his uncle (along with a few others on the same street also from the Gustavian era) in addition to basing the square primarily off of Stockholm's Gustaf Adolf Square – a Baroque construction of French-influenced neoclassicism – we are emitted a notably mixed message.[75] In addition to depriving the square of having a purely empire style, this decision also seems considerably ironic: basing the new Russian-funded city (for the glory of that empire) off of the capital city of Sweden, while also leaving an older Swedish neoclassical remnant within the very centre of the new imperial town square, all while doing this to lessen the influences of Sweden and to take a new sense of ownership over the area.

3.2: Carl Ludwig Engel and the Empire Style

Although it was Ehrenström who provided the concept of the Senate Square, he was no architect, and he knew he needed someone of considerable talent to accomplish this monumental task, as Pehr Granstedt, the man who designed and constructed what is now the Presidential Palace which overlooks the easternmost area of the seaside Market Square (and which became just after its construction the imperial palace of the Grand Duke of Finland/the Russian Emperor), was only deemed to be of "good average" skill level.[76] It was in Turku in mid-October of 1814, however, where the itinerant Prussian architect Carl Ludwig Engel met with Ehrenström, who remarked in a letter written the very next day that Engel's drawing samples were among the very best architectural designs he had ever seen.[77] By the spring of 1816, Engel had officially been employed to spearhead the Senate Square's construction, and by 1818 the first of his plans for the new imperial city, drafted fittingly in the empire style of neoclassicism, had been finalized and sent to St. Petersburg, where they were met with Alexander I's approval.[78] In addition to Klinge and Kolbe's aforementioned comments that Engel "gave the whole of Finland a new outward appearance," art historian Henrik Lilius also more directly commented that it was Engel who transformed Helsinki from out of the

[74] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 122.
[75] Lukkarinen, Ville. *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus = Riksarkivets hundraåriga byggnad*. Helsinki: VAPK-kustannus, 1990. 89.
[76] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 122.
[77] Ibid, 123.
[78] Ibid, 124.

Gustavian way of design and into the St. Petersburg-based style of imperialism.[79] Given Ehrenström's evident inclinations towards Sweden, this is most certainly true.

According to Archinfo Finland, an organization supported by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, the Museum of Finnish Architecture, the Alvar Aalto Foundation and others, Engel should be described as a disciple of Vitruvius – the aforementioned Roman progenitor of the study and application of classical architecture, and this is because Engel's works frequently display the three Vitruvian virtues of *venustas* (beauty), *firmitas* (strength) and *utilitias* (function).[80] Additionally, Lilius stated that Engel was also a close follower of the works of Andrea Palladio, another highly influential forefather of classical architecture from the 16th century, whose name is tied with the Palladianism style of classicism – one of the important movements and styles which greatly influenced the later neoclassicism of the 18th century.[81] Furthermore, and as mentioned previously towards the end of Chapter 2 with his would-be and few contributions to Russian-owned Sveaborg, Engel was both a student and resident of Berlin up until leaving Prussia in 1806 when he was nearly thirty years old.[82] Berlin is still to this day a city famous for its classical revivalist architecture traditions of numerous styles which span from over many eras, the most famous example of which is perhaps the Brandenburg Gate from the end of the 18th century. Evidently, experts seem to agree that Engel was a traditionalist who worked by the book, so to speak, and who did not adventurously divert or experiment from the time-tested and expected formulae of classicism. Even without an expert-level knowledge of architecture, this is self-evident when looking at Engel's works, especially those which constitute the Senate Square.

Before moving on from this thought, however, it should be mentioned that Engel's works under Russian financing were not the first empire-style constructions in today's Finland, although they were the first in Helsinki. In fact, the first building constructed under the influence of this new imperial style was what is now called the Old Academy Building in Turku, which was built for what was then the Royal Academy of Åbo. Although this structure was only completed in 1815 under the new Imperial Russian administration, it was first commissioned in 1802 and begun by two architects based out of Sweden proper six years prior to the eruption of the Finnish War.[83] So although it was certainly Engel who made the empire style famous and widespread across Finland, he was not the

[79] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 26. ; Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi.* 157.
[80] Archinfo Finland. "Carl Ludvig Engel." Finnish Architecture Navigator. https://navi.finnisharchitecture.fi/architect/carl-ludvig-engel/. ; Archinfo Finland. "About." Finnish Architecture Navigator. https://navi.finnisharchitecture.fi/about/.
[81] Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi.* 157.
[82] Lilius, Henrik. "Engel, Carl Ludwig." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2007.
[83] Wickberg, Nils Erik. *Finnish Architecture*. Helsinki: Otava, 1962. 68.

first to build it in this country, as the style had evidently already arrived here before the time of Finland's exchange in ownership between the two powers. It was Engel's introduction of the style to Helsinki, however, which was the catalyst for the style spreading across the country, as the result of the "greatly impressive success" his constructions enjoyed in the new metropolis.[84] Additionally, Wickberg pointed out in his 1962 English edition of *Finnish Architecture* that the empire style, by Engel's hand, is what became the most prominent architectural face of Finland not only because of the renown the style gathered through his masterworks built in Helsinki, but also because of events that happened after the Senate Square's construction began. Were it not for the Great Fire of Turku which razed almost the entirety of that city in 1827, and the loss of Vyborg (Viipuri) following the end of the Continuation War in 1944, Wickberg commented that the empire style would perhaps not be the preeminent and/or predominant style of Finland which we know it to be now. He also fully acknowledged that "the Empire style was a necessary stepping-stone towards cultural equality with the rest of Europe," and that Engel's constructs were what laid the groundwork for this style becoming so prevalent across Finland, from which neoclassicism became intertwined with Finnish identity thereafter.[85]

3.3: The Senate Square Proper: The Missing Piece

Given that it is the eldest of the three primary buildings which constitute the Senate Square, in addition to being that which gives the square its name, it would be both natural and appropriate to examine the Senate Building first and foremost. It was indeed the first built of all the buildings currently standing of those Engel designed, however, the oldest empire-era structure of the square was actually removed and replaced with the many steep steps leading up to the cathedral before the square's completion. This was the Main Guard Building, which was completed in 1819.[86] Prior to this being built, Engel had also been tasked with giving the so-called Bock House a fitting imperial facelift, with this building being the one adjacent to the Sederholm House and a few years its junior, but regardless the Main Guard Building was his first proper construction for the Senate Square.[87] The reason this building was demolished several years later, however, remains something of a mystery. Wickberg describes that it is not known exactly who gave the orders to remove and replace it, however, these orders certainly came from the top.[88] Engel passionately fought to keep it, citing that it was built under the direction of Alexander I, which we know it was indeed, and he proclaimed that

[84] Ibid.
[85] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 9.
[86] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 125.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid, 135-136.

to remove it would be to improperly adulterate a monument created with the Emperor's guidance and built in his memory.[89]

As previously mentioned, Alexander I took an active interest in the construction process of his newest imperial city, and had already at this time – even before construction began – remarked to Engel that he wished for the columns of the new Main Guard Building of the square to be built with "Paestic" orders rather than the smooth Tuscan columns which Engel had proposed – "Paestic" evidently by its name referring to the Ancient Greek city-state of Paestum, the ruins of which sit on the southern shores of Italy, a site which still today famously features some of the grandest Hellenistic temples with towering Doric columns built several centuries before the great millennial shift.[90] Wickberg followed this up with commenting that this intervention by the emperor was representative of the continued interests in Ancient Greek culture at that time, and indeed it was, for Alexander I's position at the top of the social pyramid evidently indicates just how popular this admiration for the past had become and remained across Europe (and the greater west) by the early 19th century. Additionally, although perhaps merely just by coincidence, Sir John Summerson describes in his book *The Classical Language of Architecture* that the Doric order was often used by architects to reinforce a message of roughness or toughness, and that the style has been used to represent "a soldierly bearing."[91] Should this not have been a coincidental decision made by the emperor, his assertion that this was the most fitting style for the Main Guard Building was very apt, and serves as excellent evidence for his interest – and knowledge – in classical design.

Furthermore, given its own distinct connections with the Eastern Orthodox church, which came originally from the Greek Byzantine/Eastern Roman tradition, along with Emperor Alexander sharing his name with a highly influential Ancient Hellenistic conqueror, it is plausible that there was an extra motivation felt within the Russian Empire to desire this type of ancient stylization in order to justify and legitimize its own realm by the ways of representation and appearance, however, given the wider pan-European interests in these ancient cultures at this time, one can more reliably believe that it was merely or primarily just the result of the artistic and cultural movement. Even without knowing why, exactly, Alexander I made this request, it is not at all unreasonable to assume or suggest from a distance that this may have simply been because of the more detailed nature of the Doric orders. More detail in design necessitates more effort, and more dedicated effort for the outcome not only brings a more intricate and impressive appearance to the work, but also with that,

[89] Ibid, 136.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 15.

the knowledge that those funding such a build indeed have the money to finance it – another semblance of power.

Another possible reason Engel insisted on keeping the Main Guard Building was because it accomplished something which the work of a contemporarily famous architect from his native Prussia could not accomplish. Friedrich Gilly, one of Prussia's most revered architects from the late 18th century, who possibly even taught Engel first-hand given that Gilly had been a professor at the Berlin Bauakademie where Engel received his architectural education, had famously designed and proposed a monumental temple for construction in honour of Frederick the Great. This design, however, which included a colonnade plinth highly similar to what Engel had built with the Main Guard Building, was never realised.[92] Wickberg was certain in his writing that this plinth of pillars was based off of Gilly's renowned design which had become locally famous when Engel was all of nineteen and still a student, despite the fact that it was never constructed.[93] Thus to remove this feature from the Senate Square would not only be tampering with the image supported by the original financier and co-founder of the Senate Square, Alexander I, but it would also be depriving Engel of being remembered and respected as an architect who had given life to something which had become revered and which had never before been realised.

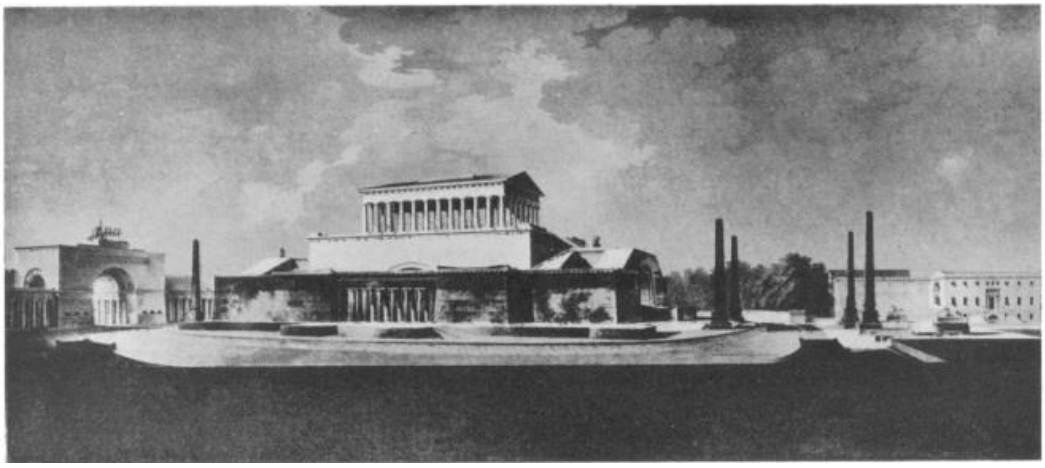
Indirectly, and for the sake of this thesis, one can very much base on Engel's feelings here that this alteration naturally also changed the original message and intent of the square, both by corrupting the architectural harmony which Engel sought to create from an aesthetic point of view, and by altering its imperialistic messaging. Regarding the architectural harmoniousness that Engel was trying to preserve, that message is quite clear: the more harmonious the assembly of the Senate Square would be, and thus the more pleasing it would be to visitors and spectators, the more praise it would receive as it would be more widely appealing to those who appreciated such things. The more it would be praised, the better it would reflect on the Russian Empire, along with its reigning emperor, and additionally with the architect who designed it under the emperor's employ – and in this specific case an architect who would be respected and immortalized through his work for being one who closely followed and respected the traditions of his craft. The imperialistic messaging of pronouncing grandeur and might through architectural means is naturally interlinked with the aesthetic accomplishments. Just as ruinous, unfixed, and dilapidated structures signal that an empire or power has met its eclipse, so too does sharp and aesthetically impressive architecture – that

[92] Oxford Reference. "Overview: Friedrich Gilly (1772-1800)." https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095852726. ; Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 138.
[93] Ibid.

which has taken a great effort to finance and construct – send a message that this reigning power is one at its apex, or at least, that said power wishes to be seen this way by onlookers both domestically and internationally. This was the same in the early 19th century as it was in the ancient days when the Greeks and Romans built their original classical structures, and this is the core message and intent of the Senate Square which will be now further explored by examining its three main edifices – the Senate Building, the Main Building of the University of Helsinki, and the Helsinki Cathedral. Unlike the neoclassical constructs of Sveaborg under the earlier Swedish regime, these buildings are far more pronounced with how they evoke the themes of ancient civility, and thus, there is far more to be analysed as to how, exactly, these structures attempt and accomplish this.

Below: An 1838 lithograph by F. Tengström of the Senate Square as Engel had originally envisioned and proposed. The Main Guard Building can be seen where the large staircase is now. Other features of the Senate Square as we know it today are missing – the independent bell towers, and the four additional domes upon the cathedral roof along with the twelve apostles. The central statue of Emperor Alexander II (depicted as Grand Duke of Finland) had yet to be made, as his reign only began in 1855.

Below: Friedrich Gilly's proposal for the monument to honour the Prussian King Frederick the Great (r. 1740-1786), revered for his victories and strategies employed during the Seven Years War. Gilly's design, which is unmistakably based on the Acropolis in Athens, was the talk of Berlin when proposed in 1797, and its lower row of colonnades can be seen quite similarly to those of Engel's Main Guard House as seen above in Tengström's lithograph. Just as Gilly has based his design very clearly from Ancient Greek work, so too did Engel likely base his work off of Gilly's.



3.4: The Senate Square Proper: The Senate Building, the University, and the Cathedral

As formerly mentioned, of the buildings still standing which compose the Senate Square as it was intended by Engel, the Senate Building – that which lends its name to the area, but which is presently known as the Government Palace – is the oldest among them. In the book *Helsingin Helmi* (*The Pearl of Helsinki* in English), Kalevi Pöykkö, a former professor of the University of Jyväskylä, is mentioned by Henrik Lilius as having "…described the spirit of the Senate Building's richly shaped main façade as Roman, in contrast to the University Building's façades he considers Greek."[94] Lilius continues this dialogue on Pöykkö's thought, concisely saying:

"Expanding on this characterisation, the ground floor's arch motifs can be considered Roman, as is the selected Corinthian column order. This was the most widely used order in Roman architecture, particularly during the time of the Caesars. The Corinthian order however has its own semantic significance within the theory of Classicism: it was on one hand an order of masculine saints and on the other hand an order expressing authority and governance. Engel's choice of this order thus expressed the building's function: it housed the Senate, the Autonomous Grand Duchy's most important administrative body."[95]

But this can be further expanded upon in order to uncover the statements and meanings emitted by this structure – be it by intention or not. Regarding the row of Corinthian columns at the building's front and middle, along with the pilasters of the same style at both ends of the building's façade, Pöykkö has correctly identified them as being commonly associated with Ancient Rome. In *The Classical Language of Architecture*, Summerson noted that the style was less common in ancient days (compared to the Tuscan and Doric orders) due to the extra expenses that would be accrued from commissioning it, because of both the more elaborate designing and the additional labour costs that would be necessitated.[96] That being said, Summerson also stated that Vitruvius viewed the Corinthian orders "as imitating the slight figure of a girl," and that later Renaissance-era architects argued whether or not said femininity was virginal or lascivious and wanton.[97] These ancient and premodern expert opinions evidently contrast quite starkly with what Pöykkö has stated. Regardless, Pöykkö's claim remains steady given that Ancient Rome is broadly and commonly recognized as a highly patriarchal and proudly masculine society, both by fact of its many military conquests – with militarism both historically and contemporarily being typically associated with male interests – and by way of Rome's laws. For example, the respected Roman jurist Gaius (130-180 AD) wrote in his *Institutiones* that Roman society's patriarchal organization and nature were unique,

[94] Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi.* 157.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 15.
[97] Ibid, 14-15.

being essentially unmatched by that of any other culture from antiquity.[98] Ancient Roman senators, governors, and politicians of all sorts were also famously and exclusively male.

Considering all of this, Engel's use of the Corinthian orders to evoke a Roman ethos and to represent the senators does not at all seem ill-placed, even as he was a studied Vitruvian disciple who surely must have known these gendering associations. Even if the orders do or did represent virtues of femininity as described by Vitruvius, one can easily supersede this with remembering that the Romans were a highly militaristic and conquest-driven society, along with being one of a distinct masculine culture. Pöykkö's mention that the order expresses Roman authority and governance is solid, as these are traits which are inseparable from the greater collective remembrance of Rome. With all of this in mind though, Summerson also states that the gender-based messages of the orders need not be taken all too seriously, and that the orders have largely been utilized and chosen according to taste, circumstance, and means, however there have indeed been a great many cases where they were explicitly chosen because of the gendered associations they make and represent.[99] Thus if Engel knew this, which it is safe to believe that he likely did, he perhaps more simply decided to select the Corinthian order since he viewed it as the most fitting for the structure.

The university – the matching building across the way – is not an identical twin, but certainly a fraternal one. It parallels its older sibling by colour, stature, and by more general appearance, but it differs by its more intricate designs, and with what those designs respectively state and represent, again whether it be by Engel's intent or not. Perhaps the most notable difference(s), given that they make for some of the most noticeable features on both buildings, are with the university building's Ionic columns. Summerson describes Vitruvius' view on the Ionic order as "characterized by feminine slenderness" – a notably similar description to the aforementioned Corinthian order.[100] Considering that the most influential voice of classical architecture believed this, and given that Engel was known to have been a close follower of his ways, it would make sense that Engel made his choice deliberately, knowing that they shared this sense of association and meaning, especially so given the overall efforts to have the buildings closely match and complement one another.

Another way in which these buildings complement one another, and which architectonically emphasizes the interconnectedness between the two, the university's outer details above its second floor windows are arched, whereas those across the way for the Senate Building are rectangular with cornices (along with the a few miniature pediments to match the arches of the university

[98] Gaius. *Institutiones.* Translated by Edward Poste. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904. 39.
[99] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 15
[100] Ibid, 14.

windows with extra emphasis – those on the sides of the columns and between the middle pediments for both buildings respectively). These details match the ground floor design of the opposing building – the Senate Building's arched entryways, along with the university's squared entryways. Additionally, and intriguingly, unlike its fraternal twin across the way, the pilasters upon the wings of the university main building's façade are not Ionic like the main pillars in the centre, but rather these are visibly Tuscan. The Senate building is consistent with this though, as the pilasters are also Corinthian to match the columns. Furthermore, the university building lacks an ornate entablature like the one its sibling structure has, which evidently by its seemingly floral inner design pattern is meant to complement the Corinthian orders beneath it. Also, these Ionic orders seen upon the main façade of the university building are continued up the street upon the roadside façade of the Topelia complex, which was actually formerly a military hospital, however, they are not continuous, as the National Library of Finland, which was formerly constructed as the university library, is represented with Corinthian orders to match the Cathedral directly across from it.[101]

Yet another intriguing aspect to keep in mind regarding the university building is that it was never originally intended to be what it is. In fact, it was originally intended to be the residence building for the Governor General of the Grand Duchy, which if it were, would certainly have reinforced the political nature of the Senate Square by its original intents and designs.[102] Klinge has written in his book *A European University: The University of Helsinki 1640-2010* that when the growing seaside settlement of Helsingfors was designated as capital in 1812, discussions of moving the university (which had recently been renamed the Imperial Alexander University of Finland) had already notably begun to emerge.[103] It was the Great Fire of Turku in the autumn of 1827 which provided the convenient catalyst for moving the institution, as this enormous inferno destroyed nearly the entire city, although coincidentally, the original university grounds remained relatively unscathed. Because of this institutional relocation, along with the long-standing associations with academia and Ancient Greece in western society, it is hard to say what this building would have looked like were it constructed for the Governor General instead as originally intended. All of Engel's original proposal blueprints for the university included by Wickberg in his book *Senaatintori* date from 1828, the year after the fire, and Engel's earlier drafts for the square, such as that from 1818, show markedly different neoclassical structures in the places of where the university and senate buildings stand.[104] This being said, and as formerly mentioned with Wickberg identifying that

[101] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 75.
[102] Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi*. 157.
[103] Klinge, Matti, Antony Landon, and Malcolm Hicks. A European University: The University of Helsinki 1640-2010. Helsinki: Otava, 2010. 283.
[104] These dated images can be located on pages 76, 94, 95 and 98 of Wickberg's *The Senate Square*.

Ehrenström's original plan for the square was indeed based on the Gustaf Adolf Square in Stockholm, it is also possible that Engel may have originally intended for these two edifices to mirror one another exactly, much like the opera house and Crown Prince's palace there in Stockholm.[105] After all, having two buildings in this Roman-based style would have reinforced the political basis behind the construction of the Senate Square.

As mentioned above regarding the evocation of Romanness with the Senate Building, which was an apt design choice given that it is Rome which is most often thought of when considering ancient senatorial institutions, Pöykkö also identified that the university's exterior contrastingly evokes the ethos of Ancient Greece. This thematic decision is one of the many ways in which these two buildings have been paired, especially since Ancient Greece and Rome are so often interlinked in modern historical perspectives, just as the two regions were in reality those many centuries ago. In particular, Pöykkö believes Engel designed the university building to bring Ancient Greek temples to mind, and this claim is supported strongly by the interior and exterior evidence. On this, Pöykkö believes that:

"… [the] entrance foyer can be interpreted as an unroofed Greek peristyle courtyard leading to an auditorium that recalls an antique amphitheatre. Engel thus created a kinetic axial sequence that led the viewer under an Apollonic temple portico, through a peristyle courtyard and into a theatre with its stage for academic ceremonies. Ivan Martos' bronze bust of Alexander I at the centre of the auditorium's rear wall terminates the axis. The Emperor, draped in a toga with a laurel wreath on his head, thus appears metaphorically as the Greek Apollo and a Roman imperator."[106]

What is interesting to note from this quotation, and especially so considering that Pöykkö identified the building as predominantly Greek, is that it does still contain some openly recognisable Roman motifs. In addition to what has been mentioned, it is also worth mentioning that the white Greek amphitheatre-inspired auditorium is outlined and supported with Corinthian columns, the style of which, as formerly mentioned, has been recognized as one which predominantly evokes Rome. Considering that Pöykkö described the formerly present bust of Alexander I as being fashioned in the style of a Roman Caesar – as opposed to a Greek Basileus, Hegemon, Archon, or something else of a Hellenistic equivalence – one need not wonder why Corinthian columns have been included, especially if it is remembered that Engel was a studied Vitruvian adherent.

Regardless of this, however, the building's exterior was also originally white, which like the auditorium's interior was more than likely chosen to evoke marble, and through that, to further liken the building with the revered structures of Ancient Greece (as it was not yet known in the early 19th

[105] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 152.
[106] Lilius, Henrik in *Helsingin Helmi.* 158.

century that the Greeks and Romans had actually painted their constructs with vibrant colours).[107] The decision to model the university in this way was likely because, contrastingly with our typical immediate associations and first thoughts of Rome, Ancient Greece is still to this day primarily associated with its intellectual, artistic, and philosophical traditions, just as it was throughout the 19th century as well. These associations naturally did not arise out of nothing; they closely reflect some of the most significant impacts which Ancient Greek society has had upon the western world. It is considerably more common, for example, to tell fables and parables from Greek mythology, or to share thoughts from Greek philosophy, than it is to do so of the Roman contributions to these fields of culture and academia. This is very much the same with how Rome is commonly viewed and mentioned in the modern west, with the larger focuses of its long and storied history more often revolving around the empire's grand military campaigns and its dangerous intrigue-based dynastic politics, as opposed to Roman contributions to mythology or philosophy. That is not to say that there were no such contributions, let alone that they were not at all significant, for a great many of them most certainly were. Just as Rome has significant histories with such things as these, so too does Ancient Greece have significant histories of empires and conquests along with political struggles and successes. But with how Rome and Greece have been so incredibly and irreversibly intertwined throughout the ages, both cultures have elements which are more pronounced for their particular side, and which thus overshadow the contributions of the other. This is why, for example, Engel's work with the university building evokes a Greek temple, as opposed to a Roman one – the building was designed to channel and represent those Ancient Greek strengths and contributions.

Above: The Main Building of the University of Helsinki's, which sits on the western side of the Senate Square and faces east. Its Ionic pillars were intended to evoke thoughts of Ancient Greece, especially given how that antiquated culture is so often chiefly associated with academia and intellectualism. Notably, this building has no entablature, and it only has small hints of design in the corners near the top so that it is not completely bare, but above its first floor windows it does have a more pronounced cornice. The white arches above the

[107] Grot, Jakov. *Calender till minne af Kejserliga Alexanders-universitetets andra secularfest*. Helsingfors: J. Simelii Enka, 1842. 99.

second floor windows match the arched entryways of the Senate Building across the square. Along with its pediment at the front and centre, and the dentil decoration extending beneath the rooftop, which itself is lowly slanted much like those seen with the structures of Suomenlinna, we can see that this is a very typical neoclassical building. Its colour, which is shared by its twin across the square, is also one commonly seen with neoclassical buildings in both Stockholm and St. Petersburg alike, even though it was originally supposed to be a white hue which resembled marble.

Below: The Senate Building, the eldest and original empire-style neoclassical building of the Senate Square, which is situated on the eastern side and which faces west. Its Corinthian columns were chosen to evoke a sense of Romanness, which is because of the renown of the Ancient Roman senate, an institution of great and central importance to the functioning of Rome even after it became an autocratic imperial power. The floral entablature is manifestly meant to complement the tops of the Corinthian pillars. This building's arched entryways match the arched window decorations of the university building, and the squared entryways of the university building match the squared window decorations to this building. Being the basis for the university across from it and for many other structures which came after it, the construction of this building birthed the legacy of empire style neoclassicism which spread across both Helsinki and the nation of Finland at large.

The fact that this area of the city is known as 'the Senate Square', as opposed to the University or Cathedral Square, is quite telling about the functional aims originally intended of the square overall, especially so given that the university was originally supposed to be the Governor General's palace. It is known from Ehrenström's original conception that the elevated cathedral was already an established idea, and additionally it is known by their designs that the cathedral was also constructed to be the square's most impressive and dominating structure, as well as its focal point. Given these two factors in particular, it really would not at all be unreasonable to regard the area as 'the Cathedral Square' instead. Something to consider that would reinforce this is that the cathedral dominantly lords over the other two buildings with its elevated presence and stature. More than any other physical or structural element, the cathedral truly owns the square. This positioning was likely not just for aesthetic purposes, however, given that said positioning reinforces the building's own functional purpose as a house of God. As with any hierarchal religious belief system, the reigning god or gods hold omnipotence and omniscience beyond all other conceivable earthly powers.

By structuring the square with the cathedral directly above the buildings that would be occupied and utilized by the state's highest authorities, there is a message being reinforced that they too are beneath this higher power, and in the case of an early 19th-century empire, this also

reinforces and justifies the reign of the emperor. This is not only because it was the power of the empire which conceived and financed this entire area, but also because in the eyes of Christian nations historically speaking, the rule of the monarchy was always justified as being God's will, else God would not have instituted the monarchy in the first place. With this in mind in particular towards the Senate Square, we can conceive that God is the highest of all authorities, and God has placed the emperor as the highest of all authorities in this realm, and thus that his rule over his subjects is justified, as God was the one to decide that this particular monarch should rule the realm and the people within it. This is all implied, but this is not the only implication which the Helsinki Cathedral makes through its physical existence. As mentioned the introduction, Helsinki Cathedral would become celebrated as Engel's most famous work from throughout both Finland and the north-eastern Baltic Sea region, along with being the project which occupied the greatest amount of time and effort for him to construct. Its foundations were laid in 1830, but it was not consecrated until 1852, and Engel never lived to see it completed, as he passed in 1840 at the age of sixty-two.[108] Intriguingly though, as revealed by his personal notes, Engel did not much care for this edifice in terms of its shape and design, and that his attitude towards this project was rather unenthused.[109] This is actually most important to consider, because this clues us into why, exactly, it looks the way it does, as well as informing us of what this structure means and stands for.

Much like the Senate Building, the Helsinki Cathedral's columns are Corinthian. Considering what was revealed earlier in this chapter through referring to the expertise of Sir John Summerson, Corinthian columns have long held the position of being the most expensive pillars to make, and this was/is an extension of this style being more elaborate and ornate than the other options. Ergo, such columns would be the most fitting for a house of God, which is something built not only to praise God in, but also to honour God with. In addition to what was mentioned about the university and senate buildings, Helsinki Cathedral too was consciously based off of particular Greek and Roman principles, and more so than just by its outer appearance and design. Not only did Engel seek to create the shape of the Cathedral in reference to "a Latin cross" (which Wickberg has since identified was actually meant to be a Greek one, and that the Prussian architect likely made a simple mistake of confusion by writing this in his notes), but Engel also wrote the following as well in a letter to a friend.[110]

"A church in the Graeco-Roman style makes a pleasant impression, the effect is gentle and fills us with wellbeing. Our feelings remain calm, because the harmonious relations between all of the parts

[108] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 72.
[109] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 132.
[110] Ibid.

and masses and between them and the totality are attuned to each other, and they have meaning; not, as in Gothic churches, deafening us with their screaming, bizarre contrasts."[111]

Given what Engel said here with a specific regard to acknowledging his work and design as Graeco-Roman rather than individually Greek or Roman (along with his clear disdain for Gothic architecture), and given the age of the Cathedral, as it is the youngest structure of the neoclassical empire style ensemble, it is quite possible that Engel constructed the cathedral to be a merger of the two ancient Mediterranean cultures. This would also be thematically fittingly with how it is physically positioned between buildings with more respectively pronounced Greek and Roman design motifs. Considering the highly important role played by both the Greek and Roman cultures into the formation of Christianity from over the centuries even before the great imperial division of Western and Eastern Rome, which subsequently also established their respective churches, it would make sense to physically represent these intertwined cultural histories of European Christianity through the architecture of this edifice, especially so considering its placement between the aforementioned Greek and Roman-based buildings. Another extension of this Graeco-Romanness evident with the building is that Wickberg mentioned it appears far more 18th-century than it perhaps should, with Wickberg likening it to the oldest neoclassical buildings in Washington D.C. and the Panthéon in Paris – buildings which were constructed during the height of the neoclassical Graeco-Roman revivalist era.[112] Wickberg further stated that Helsinki Cathedral closely resembles Berlin's Gendarmenmarkt Cathedrals, both of which are also constructs of the 18th century, and which Engel most certainly would have known from his younger years growing up and studying in Berlin.[113] When we reconsider Engel's inspiration from Gilly's proposal of 1798 in conjunction with these two other constructs of Berlin, we can begin to see a clear pattern of Prussian influences manifested here in mid-19th century Helsinki.

But aside from its visibly evident inspirations from the ancient Mediterranean sources, and through that from other neoclassical structures which can be seen throughout the west, Helsinki Cathedral is truly not an original building by design. This is not to say it is because Helsinki Cathedral appears to be very similar to other neoclassical structures, and particularly with other cathedrals of the same era in general, but rather because Helsinki Cathedral is manifestly twinned to Trinity Cathedral in St. Petersburg, which was constructed during similar years from 1828 to 1835 and designed by Russian architect Vasili Stasov.[114] Both the colour and design schemes for Helsinki Cathedral's domes also come from Trinity Cathedral, which was designated as the regimental place

[111] Wickberg. *The Senate Square*. 135.
[112] Ibid, 132.
[113] Ibid, 133.
[114] Ibid, 137.

of prayer for the Russian military's illustrious Ismailov Regiment (whose primary regimental colour is blue) the year before its completion.[115] In addition to this explicit Russian connection, there is another. Engel stated in his personal notes that he "sought to recreate the experience of the Kazan Cathedral" for those who would enter into his Helsinki construct, with Kazan Cathedral being yet another domed edifice of St. Petersburg with a forefront portico of Corinthian columns (in addition to its broad and extravagant colonnade wings).[116]

Despite these clear and explicit connections which both state a message of and represent just how interlinked Helsinki was with St. Petersburg in this period, it should be mentioned that the former among them was not Engel's decision, but rather that of the man who replaced him following his death – a Westphalian architect named Ernst Bernhard Lohrmann.[117] Previously (as one can see with the 1838 lithograph by F. Tengström), Helsinki Cathedral hosted only one domed bell tower – it was Lohrmann who oversaw the renovations to liken it to Trinity Cathedral in St. Petersburg by adding the four smaller ones. Although the consciously designed likeness to Kazan Cathedral was already in place, as designed by Engel, Lohrmann's change essentially russified the also Prussian-influenced structure. This was not all that Lohrmann did, for he also oversaw that the free-standing bell towers would independently sit upon the corners of the man-made precipice, and it was under Lohrmann's direction that the Twelve Apostles found their way upon the triangular peaks of the Cathedral's pediments. By doing all of this, Lohrmann did not just change the appearance of the cathedral, he also altered the messages emitted by both the cathedral and the Senate Square overall. Engel's allusion to the Gendarmenmarkt churches – a personal artistic expression and a linkage to his native Berlin – was essentially masked and overshadowed with the addition of the four smaller bell towers, which inextricably twinned Helsinki Cathedral with Trinity Cathedral, and with St. Petersburg instead.

[115] Wickberg. *The Senate Square*. 137.
[116] Pöykkö, Kalevi in *Helsingin Helmi*. 159.
[117] Sinisalo, Jarkko. "Lohrmann, Ernst Bernhard." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3435.

Below: St. Petersburg's Trinity Cathedral, the construction of which started in 1828 just before the construction of Helsinki Cathedral. The visual similarities between the two edifices are abundantly clear. This photo was dated June 6th 2017, and uploaded thereafter to the Wikimedia Commons. This is actually relevant to its appearance, as the Trinity Cathedral suffered significantly from a fire in 2006, hence its less weathered appearance for a building which is well over a century and a half years old.

Below: A cropped close-up of a lithograph of the Senate Square in 1859 by F. Liewendal, displaying the architectural additions of the 1840s which gave the Senate Square the appearance we know it by now (save for the missing central statue of Alexander II, which had yet to be added). By creating the four extra domed towers of Helsinki Cathedral, Lohrmann irreversibly changed its design from a Prussian-based design to a Russian, and particularly St. Petersburg-based one. Although the locations of the four domes of Helsinki Cathedral are not identical to the placements of those upon the roof of Trinity Cathedral, they certainly evoke the same appearance, especially given that their closer detailed designs are virtually identical, with the same starry appearances upon a blue (now appearing green) base. Photo scanned from Nils Erik Wickberg's *Senaatintori*, page 119.

Chapter 4: The Old Student House, Ateneum, and the National Romantic Movement

Separated by over a quarter-century in terms of their constructions but united in their neighbouring proximities to one another, along with their shared overall styles, the Old Student House and Ateneum buildings are strong examples of structures with numerous socio-political commentaries consciously built into their pronouncedly classical designs. Along with their core central locations downtown, these two buildings were also constructed as notable firsts both in Helsinki and Finland alike. Built in the neo-Renaissance style, a mid-19th century revivalist trend under the larger movement of classical revivalism, the Student House (which was originally named as such, although it is now commonly referred to as the "Old Student House" as there is another now called the "New Student House") shares a great deal of its outer appearance with the older empire-style builds of the early 19th century. It was also the first significant building in the city and country specifically designed to architecturally embody the spirit of Finnish national society and the mobilizing of the people in the form of a specific organization.[118] Similarly, Ateneum was later constructed as Finland's first art museum, which has also since developed into the country's best known and most celebrated, as it contains within its walls a great number of highly important nationally representative works, many of which contribute to the Finnish National Gallery – the representation of the ethos of the nation through fine art.[119] In further likeness to the Student House, the Ateneum building was also designed and constructed as a conscious homage to Renaissance classicism, and it too utilizes this idealism of the Renaissance era to represent Finland's national spirit and character through its exterior designs.

4.1: Finland's Mid-19th Century National Romanticism Developments

Following the establishment of the semiautonomous Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809, which officially determined the nation as having its own borders, laws, and legislations – even as it were without independence from the Russian Empire – a general sense of self and self-possession continued to bud in Finland throughout the decades thereafter. Events which occurred throughout both the wider Russian Empire and across the European continent in the years following also assisted in the development of Finnish nationhood, for example with the bloody eleven-month uprising in Poland from November 1830 until October 1831, which inspired the foundation for the Finnish Literature Society, and with the highly influential and significant Revolutions of 1848 later

[118] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 45.
[119] Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Höijer, Theodor." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3400.

sweeping across the continental mainland, which inspired the occasion at which the Finnish flag was publicly flown for the first time.[120] All the while, Europe was also amidst a great artistic and cultural epoch, known as the Romantic era, which had started to reach its climax and apex by the mid-to-late 19th century. In Finland, all of these influences and more aligned to bring about the National Romantic movement, which many still today recognize as an instrumental artistic and cultural golden age in Finnish history which was crucial for the later development of Finnish independence.

Culturally inspired Romantic-era works from authors, such as with Elias Lönnrot's 1835 compilation of the *Kalevala*, Johan Ludvig Runeberg's 1848 epic, *The Tales of Ensign Stål*, and Aleksis Kivi's 1870 *The Seven Brothers*, played a crucial role in the development of Finnish national identity by bringing interests in the history, mythology, language, and culture of Finland and its people to the forefront of society within the imperial Grand Duchy. Works such as these, and those who wrote them, not only inspired one another perpetually during this period, but also generations of Finnish cultural actors and contributors thereafter, as they continue to do so today as well. By the 1860s and 1870s, Finland's National Romanticism movement was in full motion, and in addition to all that was developing and occurring on the cultural front, the Grand Duchy also began to show serious signs of forthcoming independence by circulate its own currency and printings its own postage stamps, along with forming its own distinct military independent from the Russian Empire.[121] This great movement was also guided along, supported, and shaped by significant works of architecture simultaneously being conceived and constructed throughout this period. Several structures built in Helsinki in particular at this time, such as the Student House and Ateneum art museum, celebrated the culturally and politically burgeoning Finnish nation and characterized its place among the other greatly influential countries and cultures across Europe.

4.2: The Old Student House: Architectural Meanings and Messages

Although they did not comment much on the architectural design of the Old Student House in their 2007 book *Helsinki: Daughter of the Baltic*, Klinge and Kolbe did state that this "building on the corner of Aleksanterinkatu and the present-day Mannerheimintie is perhaps the most important single building in the history of the Finnish nation as such."[122] They continued this thought and justified their claim by explaining that the funds for the building were gathered from across the country starting in 1858 by the students of Imperial Alexander University – that which would later become the University of Helsinki – and they additionally stated that the subsequent construction of

[120] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 31.
[121] Wickberg. *The Senate Square.* 121.
[122] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 45.

this building, which concluded in 1870 "coincided almost exactly with the dawn of the new parliamentary age and the construction of the railway."[123] Furthermore, they elaborated that "all these things formed part of the transformation of Helsinki from a garrison town and seat of administration and learning to a complex modern city with accents on democracy, the press, business activity, urban middle-class values and the emergence of an industrial working population."[124] Evidently, as Klinge and Kolbe have demonstrated, the Student House was created at a highly instrumental time for the development of Helsinki as a metropolis and for Finland as a nation. This building was not only financed by the people of the country, but it contributed integrally to these aforementioned political development processes by being a place where liberally-minded students could gather and fraternize to share their ideals with one another, with many of these university students later taking on key roles as cultural actors or as persons in the Finnish government who later contributed and led to the country's independence. From all of this alone, we can acknowledge that this is indeed a building of great national and municipal importance, however, the Student House also offers us a great insight to the politics of its day through its exterior appearance, which is markedly rich with classical motifs in the neo-Renaissance style.

Its architect, Hampus Dalström, was popular amongst those of his profession in Helsinki during his time, especially in the 1860s, and he was highly involved in many of the city's construction projects for a great part of his life.[125] Many of his constructs in Helsinki were built with arches and in the neo-Renaissance style of his day and age.[126] Dalström had studied architecture formally in Stockholm in the mid-1840s, and apprenticed under his uncle afterwards, who was a building contractor in Paris at that time.[127] He later returned to Paris for a second time in the early 1860s to study there at the prestigious Académie des Beaux-Arts.[128] This certainly would have been an excellent time for an architecture student in Paris, given that the city had just begun its enormous and radical redesigning process under Napoleon III and his Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann – an effort which came as a response to the massive violent protests which Paris endured in 1848 as an epicentre of the revolutions which occurred across Europe that year. By coincidence, and according to his own words, while he was in Paris for the first time at nineteen years of age, Dalström had been swept up and involved in the street battles which occurred then.[129] Should this be true, it is not

[123] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki, Daughter of the Baltic: A Short Biography*. 45-46.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Dalström, Hampus." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3343.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Viljo. "Dalström, Hampus." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.

at all unreasonable to imagine that this experience played an integral role in forming his personal character and beliefs as an adult. Additionally, given the pronouncedly nationalistic appearance of his most famous construct – the Student House, which was a building funded by the people for the people – we can indeed see from his work that Dalström was a man of strong political opinions.

Below: The main façade of what is now called the Old Student House, as designed by Hampus Dalström. Although significantly matching the elder empire-style structures which preceded it by several decades and which set the standard for what the city of Helsinki was to look like, this building is markedly more detailed and ornamented, as built in the neo-Renaissance style of classicism.

In addition to sharing its primary exterior yellow hue with a great many of the other empire-style buildings from throughout Helsinki, the Student House also combines what appear to be both distinctly Greek and Roman features of classical design to represent itself and its overall message with. One of the most pronounced features is the ensemble of pillars upon the main façade. These columns are notably of the Composite order – a style which combines the features of the Ionic and Corinthian orders from after the ancient days of Vitruvius, and which was first identified only in the mid-15th century during the Italian Renaissance era.[130] Given that this building was constructed as a part of the neo-Renaissance wave, this latter point helps to explain why, exactly, we see this order here, and not elsewhere with regards to the older classical constructs of Helsinki. Composite orders often vary quite widely between how identifiably Ionic or Corinthian they are, and with those seen here upon the Student House, the spiralling Ionic elements are visibly more pronounced than the

[130] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 124.

Corinthian elements immediately below them. These noticeable spirals are also matched further up at the top of the building by the smaller Ionic pilasters beneath the two twin pediments on both sides of the façade's frieze. Considering the academic nature behind the Student House along with those whom it was constructed to serve – the students of the university – it would appear to be beyond a doubt that this was purposefully done in order to match the Ionic designs which can be seen on the university building' main façade. Additionally, the pilasters which sit upon the outer corners of the building's second floor and below each miniature pediment window overhang (save for those within and between the pillared façade, which have arched overhangs instead) are also reminiscent and evocative of those seen on the university building, as these share an identifiably Tuscan design.

Despite all of this which appears to be directly linking the Student House with the university's Main Building, there are however also some noticeable differences between the two which reflect that the Student House is not only from a different era, but that it has indeed also been constructed for its own separate purposes. For example, the main entryways are formed with arches, much like those seen across from the university upon the ground floor of the Senate Building. Additionally, the aforementioned pilasters and pillars are both considerably more detailed than their university building counterparts. These pillars have fluted shafts – the likes of which are not seen anywhere within the Senate Square, as all of the columns there are solid and bare. Furthermore, these pillars seen upon the Student House are actually not free-standing, as they are attached by their rears to the main body of the building, and unlike the university building's Ionic columns, it appears that these Composite ones upon the Student House hold up considerably less structurally speaking, and that they are likely only there for the sake of appearances. On such purely decorative columns, Sir John Summerson stated that "the orders are, in many Roman buildings, quite useless structurally but they make their buildings expressive, they make them speak; they conduct the building, with sense and ceremony and often with great elegance, into the mind of the beholder. Visually, they dominate and control the buildings to which they are attached."[131]

Although these fluted Composite pillars upon the Student House certainly do not dominate the entirety of this particular building by way of its appearance, given that this façade is quite ornate and detailed with a great deal of competition between its decorative elements, the pillars do still make a pronounced remark. That remark is that this is unmistakably a classical building which descends from the Graeco-Roman traditions while simultaneously also adhering to the greater stylization in this city, along with imitating the Italian Renaissance. Additionally, as noted by its

[131] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 20.

visibly shared features, this building logically displays a more direct connection with the university. Even as columns alone are usually some of the most obvious indicators of classical architecture, due to the fact that they typically hold a much more significant role for a building both in terms of its overall appearance as well as for its structural needs, the Student House is rich with a number of classical features in addition to those which have already been mentioned. For example, a dentil makes its way around the entirety of the building just below its primary upper cornice, and the frieze upon the top and middle of the façade features figures clad in togas, nude, and with some donning Corinthian helmets, evoking a very strongly Greek feeling to match that of the spiralled Ionic pilaster and pillar tops. This frieze, which features the Ancient Greek mythological tale of Cleobis and Biton, was sculpted by Walter Runeberg, who later also created the Senate Square statue of Emperor Alexander II along with the likeness of his own father, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, in the Esplanadi park.[132] Although this frieze is full of symbolism in itself, its purely Greek inspiration does not stand out nearly as much as the sculptures which guard the building's main entrance, which make for perhaps the most intriguing elements of the entire building's exterior altogether. There is much to be said about these two statues within the arched recesses beside the Student House's main entryway. By assessing their identities, histories, and how they have been formed, we can identify them for what they represent and the meanings behind them, beyond the fact that they have clearly been created as direct emulations of Ancient Graeco-Roman works fitted with Finnish mythology figures.

These sculptures are of Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen respectively, two central figures of the *Kalevala* and of Finland's ancient polytheistic pantheon. They were completed in 1888 by Robert Stigell, who studied his craft in St. Petersburg, London, and Rome, and who also apprenticed under W. Runeberg.[133] They were commissioned by Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä, a literature professor and nationalist who frequented the same circles as Johan Vilhelm Snellman, Lönnrot, and the aforementioned J. L. Runeberg – all of whom are still remembered and revered today for their key contributions to the creation of the Finnish nation's identity and its sense of self.[134] By their outer colouring – or rather by their lack thereof – we can identify and confirm that these statues are indeed from before the twentieth century, for it was not until more recently in history that the commonly accepted belief became that the ancient marble works of Greece and Rome – the likes of

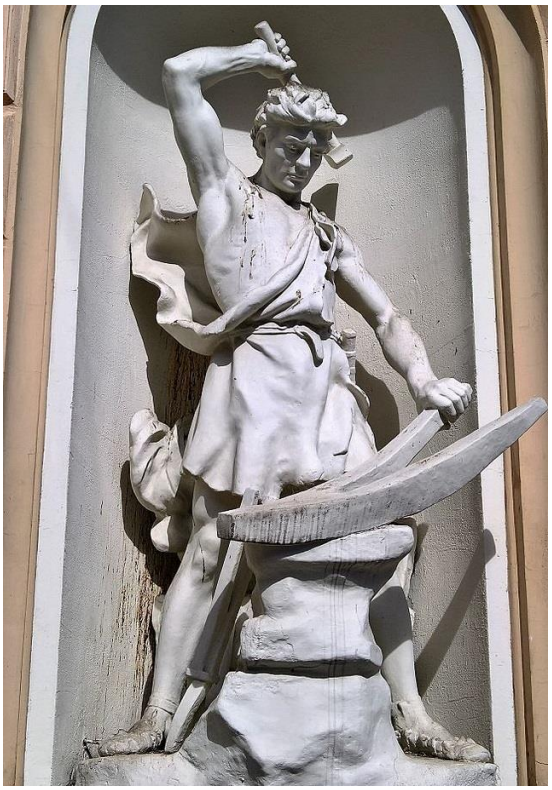
[132] Lindgren, Liisa. "Runeberg, Walter." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3611. ; Helsinki Art Museum (HAM). "Kleobis ja Biton/Cleobis and Biton." https://www.hamhelsinki.fi/en/sculpture/kleobis-ja-biton-walter-runeberg/.
[133] Lindgren, Liisa. "Stigell, Robert." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3646.
[134] Ibid. ; Saarenheimo, Eero. "Aspelin-Haapkylä, Eliel." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3125.

which statues such as these seek to closely evoke and emulate – were actually vibrantly coloured, despite what was commonly believed for generations. By being this marble white, but by simultaneously aiming to evoke the art style of the Mediterranean ancients, these statues of Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen are in a way ironically and inadvertently actually imitating Renaissance-era norms, as it was the widespread belief of influential premodern sculptors like Michelangelo that the ancient works were simply and only white, as seen with his own highly famous sculptures like *David* and *La Pietà*.[135] This was because by the time that sculptors of the Renaissance era examined the remnants from antiquity, the vibrant colours which were originally upon them had all but faded away, leaving those of the early 16th century to imitate the idolized ancient works as they themselves had seen them.[136] To them, there was essentially no evidence whatsoever that these were once painted. Even as the Student House was a building constructed consciously in the neo-Renaissance style, that which aimed to closely emulate many features of original Renaissance-era classicism, Stigell, let alone Dalström, could not possibly have known that the purely white marble works of that era were only unique to then, as opposed to the ancient days which they were ultimately aiming to emulate with these statues of ancient folkloric pre-Christian figures.

But by choosing this white marble stylization in particular, as opposed to bronze or grey concrete, the message of this pairing is very clearly, much like the rest of the building around them, that the Finnish nation is a European nation, and at that, it is a European nation which also descends respectably from the Ancient Graeco-Roman traditions which have so largely influenced the continent. By creating structures such as these in stone, the likes of which very closely emulate and adhere to the ancient works which are still today so greatly revered across the continent, the nation of Finland is proclaiming its place as one with legitimacy as a part of the wider European collection of nations. Additionally, with the representations of ancient Finnic deities, these sculptures are also promotions of Finnish culture, broadcasting to passers-by that Finnish culture is just as respectable and historic as any other in Europe – especially among any other which also visibly descends and identifies itself from the same Ancient Mediterranean traditions.

Below: Ilmarinen (left) and Väinämöinen (right) as they appear on their respective sides of the Old Student House entryway. These statues were sculpted by Robert Stigell, who completed them in 1888. By emulating classical Greek and Roman sculptures, and doing so with a marble white colour, Stigell, like many sculptors both before and after his time, has inadvertently actually created statues which adhere to Renaissance-era stylization. Furthermore, with these two figures being from the Ancient Finnic polytheistic pantheon, their stylizations like Greek and Roman statues make a nationalistic statement of the worth of Finland's history and culture. Not only were these works created during the national romantic era of Finnish history, but they are also quite literally romanticized versions of these two Finnic mythology figures.

[135] Gurewitsch, Matthew. "True Colors." Smithsonian Institution. Smithsonian Magazine, July 2008. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/true-colors-17888/?no-ist.
[136] Ibid.




Pairing with this analysis of the statues as representations of Finland's late 19th-century claims to Europeanness, the Student House's façade also features a Latin phrase which reads "Spei Svae Patria Dedit" upon its two small pediments, directly above of the neoclassical sculptures and on both sides of the Cleobis and Biton frieze by Walter Runeberg. Klinge and Kolbe have translated this statement as "a gift from the Motherland to its future hope."[137] Given the aforementioned history behind the construction and commissioning of the Student House, the funds of which were raised from people across the Grand Duchy of Finland by and for the students of the university, it is fairly self-evident as to what this Latin statement means in regards to the building; that the building was erected by the people of one generation for the people of the generations to follow them. What is not manifestly self-evident, however, is why this phrase is written in Latin, especially when one considers the formerly discussed and clearly visible Grecian motifs upon the building in great abundance. One would think that the language to be used for stating this message, especially considering the identifiably Greek mythology story being represented by the frieze, would naturally also be Greek. As discussed earlier with the stylistic constructs which can be seen at Suomenlinna and with the Senate Square, however, the synthesizing of Greek and Roman motifs in 19th-century European art and architecture was not at all uncommon. That being said, there is simply no denying that the Latin language holds an especially prominent place among the histories and cultures of a

[137] Klinge and Kolbe. *Helsinki: Daughter of the Baltic*. 45.

great many Western European nations. Finland, due to its history, is one of these nations, and having a Latin inscription such as this is also something of an effort to secure and confirm that Finland is indeed a part of a larger European history. This mirrors the exact same statement being made with the architecture of the building overall.

Below: The Latin inscription and Greek mythology frieze of the Old Student House. The mythological tale it portrays is of Cleobis and Biton. The two brothers are being followed on the left by a procession of priestesses carrying cult objects along with what appears to be a farmer with sacrificial lambs. On the right ahead of the brothers, who are pulling their mother in a chariot, soldiers, identifiable by their Corinthian helmets, and other citizens observe them. This myth tells a tale of sacrifice, and of the love between children and their parents, both elements of which very well may have been chosen to represent the students of Finland who were grateful to their countrymen for financing this building.[138] The Latin inscription on both sides of the frieze emphasizes the very same themes.

Aside from all of this deeper analysis, however, it is a simple matter of fact that the Latin language, be it detached as it may be from any institution using it to represent themselves with, holds a place of unparalleled power in terms of its associations with legitimacy and prestige, hence its greatly ubiquitous and widespread use throughout European history. The same holds true for many of the elements present upon the Student House, the likes of which were created and designed to serve the same function – to send a message to onlookers that the Finnish people and their culture are just as ancient and storied as the Greeks and Romans who so massively shaped and influenced the entirety of Europe and wider European identity. By consciously adopting the classical styles of the Greeks and Romans, along with motifs from the Renaissance era in addition to elements of the newer empire style buildings which the Russians had redesigned and re-established Helsinki with, the Student House pays homage to all of these architectural ancestries while simultaneously also proclaiming that Finland and its people are worthy of their own recognitions.

4.3: Ateneum: Architectural Meanings and Messages

Ateneum's outward appearance makes a great many of the same statements as the Student House, doing so as a structure of the same neo-Renaissance movement, but with a significantly

[138] Helsinki Art Museum (HAM). "Kleobis ja Biton/Cleobis and Biton." https://www.hamhelsinki.fi/en/sculpture/kleobis-ja-biton-walter-runeberg/.

different outward appearance which has moved beyond relative identifiability to the older empire-style constructs of the city. The building also makes a few different statements regarding the politics of the day. The name itself, although evidently a Fennicization of the Latin Athenaeum, is immediately suggestive of both the intents and elements of the building's exterior presentation. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes the origin and etymology of the word as follows: "Latin *Athenaeum*, a school in ancient Rome for the study of arts, from Greek *Athēnaion*, a temple of Athena, from *Athēnē*."[139] Given that this Helsinki building is a home for the arts, along with the fact that it was simultaneously also founded as an academic institution for studying them, the name was well chosen, especially when one considers this in conjunction with the building's outward appearance, which is rich with traditionally classical and neo-Renaissance classical motifs.

The name *Ateneum* was recommended by Carl Gustaf Estlander, a professor of aesthetics and modern literature at the Imperial Alexander University, a central figure behind the founding of the Swedish Literature Society of Finland, and a staunch proponent for the construction of the art museum – Finland's first of its kind.[140] Estlander justified this name by explaining that Athena, the goddess of intelligence, was also the deity of handicrafts, and that the Ancient Greeks respected such works as a form of art.[141] His goal with Ateneum was to have traditional arts and applied arts merged together in oneness with the presentation of the building, as these fields had formerly been recognized together during the classical and Renaissance eras, and in essence, this is why the building's exterior was designed to portray Renaissance classicism.[142] Despite having this historical justification, Estlander's position was divisive and controversial amongst his contemporaries.[143] Estlander's luck changed, however, when Fennoman supporters sought to build the National Museum of Finland in the newer National Romantic style, as it was this newer controversy which eased criticisms upon his desires for the Ateneum, thus allowing the idea to proceed.[144]

The architect selected to build this ornate edifice was Theodor Höijer, another of Helsinki's most popular 19th-century architects much like Dalström, whom Höijer had worked

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[139] Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "athenaeum," accessed October 8, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/athenaeum.
[140] University of Helsinki. "Carl Gustaf Estlander | 375 Humanists." Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki, 2014. https://375humanistia.helsinki.fi/en/humanists/carl-gustaf-estlander. ; Arkio, Tuula, Harald Arnkil, Susanne Lehtinen, Marjatta Levanto, Severi Parko, and Matti Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. Helsinki: Valtion taidemuseo, 1991. 21.
[141] Ibid, 24.
[142] Ibid, 25.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.

under.[145] Due to the fact that the building would provide spaces for both the Art Association of Finland and the Finnish Art Society in addition to its museum functions, it was financed by the Grand Duchy of Finland, and following various planning and competition phases, the task for erecting this considerable institution was entrusted to Höijer by Leo Mechelin, a Finnish senator, a former law professor, and nationalist who had been regarded by the Russian Empire as the "head separatist" in Finland during his time.[146] It is believed that Mechelin favoured Höijer, whom Nils Erik Wickberg described in his book *Finnish Architecture* as "the most prominent architect of the time…" who had proven himself to be "…able to bind the rich plaster ornamentations of his façades into strong, unifying lines," and in order to make sure that Höijer's design plan for the building would be realised, Mechelin used his senatorial status to overrule the decision(s) of the Board of Public Buildings.[147] With just this brief history of its founding along with mentioning only a few of its key founders, it can already be seen that the Ateneum building was politicized in nature even before its construction began. This politicization of the building became further amplified with its realisation, due to the numerous commentaries being made by the building's main façade.

Ateneum's exterior design borrows from numerous other European countries and cultures, and it does this considerably more than it may appear to from a basic analysis. In addition to all of the typical Greek and Roman elements, it is believed that three buildings from Munich – the Alte Pinakothek, the Neue Pinakothek, and the Glyptothek art museums – along with the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, directly influenced the shaping and appearance of this newer institution for Helsinki.[148] These other earlier 19th-century buildings also served as a conduit from which Ateneum received some of its ancient motifs as well. For example, when comparing specifically between the Victoria and Albert Museum along with the Glyptothek, it is evident that both of their tympanums influenced the design for Ateneum's. Like the Victoria and Albert Museum, the female figure in the centre is distributing two laurel wreaths, and simultaneously like the Glyptothek, the central female figure, who is known to be the Greek goddess Athena, is faced on both sides by renderings which respectively represent classical artistry and craftsmanship.[149] The abundance of arched windows across Ateneum's façade is also strongly reminiscent of both the Alte and Neue Pinakothek buildings. Considering these notably direct influences, along with the fact that the building's overall style ultimately borrows from Italy as well, as that was where the Renaissance was

[145] Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Höijer, Theodor." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.
[146] Ibid. ; Helen, Tapio. "Mechelin, Leo." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3553.
[147] Viljo. "Höijer, Theodor." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. ; Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 80.
[148] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 17, 35-36.
[149] Ibid.

born, we can identify that Ateneum was evidently designed as a statement which stresses that it is a European construct, and that Finland is a European nation in its own right.

The building's message of Europeanness is further reinforced by its elements which were not identifiably borrowed from other 19th-century institutions, but which imitate Renaissance and classical-era styles more directly. One of the ways in which the façade does this is with the sixteen miniature portraits which cross along the front of the building beneath the thin cornice which divides the second and third floors. If one is facing the building directly, those on the left are likenesses of artists and sculptors like Peter Paul Rubens, Rembrandt, and Michelangelo amongst others. Those on the right are of architects such as Karl Friedrich Schinkel, François Mansart, and even the locally important Engel, along with a few others. These portraits where crafted in Paris by Ville Vallgren, a friend of Stigell, the sculptor of the Student House statues.[150] Höijer desired these portraits to have a more traditional classical look, however, Vallgren strongly opposed this, believing that spectators would not be able to recognize them without their well-known defining features, such as with the hats of Rubens and Rembrandt.[151] But regardless of whether or not these famed artists, sculptors, and architects would have been represented in more classical appearances, the existences of their likenesses alone bolster the message of European identity connectedness that the building aims for overall.

Another example of this is message of Europeanness with the Ateneum building's exterior is with its classical orders. Tuscan pillars can be seen with the first floor entryways, Ionic pillars accompany the more accentuated window arches of the second floor, and Corinthian orders stand with those upon the third floor, along with taller Corinthian pilasters surrounding them. One can identify that these orders become more complex in style as the floors increase in height, which may very well be a message in itself in addition to the messages that the styles respectively convey. Unlike many more traditional neoclassical builds, however, the Ateneum building follows the same path as the Student House by relegating the orders to a lesser importance whilst making its white marble sculptures its most pronounced features. Unlike the Student House, however, these statues, all of which were also constructed of concrete but which convincingly emulate the appearance of traditional white marble, focus primarily on the European identity perspective, as opposed to the Finnish one.[152]

[150] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 12. ; Lindgren, Liisa. "Stigell, Robert." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.
[151] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 46.
[152] Ibid, 11.

Starting from the main central part of the façade, the entryway is overlooked by three busts: those of Raphael, Phidias, and Bramante, which were sculpted by Carl Sjöstrand, who was a key figure for the education of sculpting in Finland, and who also sculpted both the tympanum and caryatides above these three busts.[153] From an average passer-by's viewpoint – even for one who may have an above-average knowledge of art, art history, and architecture – the selection and literal laureling of these three particular historic figures may seem somewhat curious. This was also the case soon after the building was completed, with many wondering why, exactly, these three figures were chosen.[154] It has been suggested that Raphael was elected for this trio because of his popularity and admiration amongst the artistic communities across Europe at the time of Ateneum's construction.[155] The same holds true for Bramante respectively, whose architectural influences held a similar place of popularity and reverence in the late nineteenth century.[156] Phidias was selected for the centre position between the two Italian Renaissance masters because of his ancientness in addition to his mastery of sculpting, which would allow the works and masters of the classical period to be given direct recognition as well. [157] Although it is not explicitly mentioned in the 1991 book *Ateneum,* Phidias was likely also selected because it was he who oversaw the construction of the Parthenon – that which celebrates Athena in her city of Athens, and which for centuries has been recognized as one of the most important and influential classical constructs of the ancient world.'[158] The fact that Phidias is Greek may have been another reason for his selection, given that a Roman in his position, such as Vitruvius, would likely be viewed as an Italic imbalance that would go against the primary message of concord being emitted by both the building on a whole, and with these three masters visible in equal positions to one another. Together these three busts ultimately represent the unification of architecture, sculpting, and fine art in regards to this museum, but also the times when these fields were unified before – referring to the classical and Renaissance eras, both era of which are idolized golden ages of these mediums.[159]

On the note of concord in particular, the four caryatides just below the pediment cooperatively double the representations of the three busts below them, along with being yet another reference to Ancient Athenian masterworks from the Acropolis. Although looking relatively

[153] Lindgren, Liisa. "Sjöstrand, Carl." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3635.
[154] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 11.
[155] Ibid, 27.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] "Phidias | Biography, Works and Facts." Encyclopædia Britannica. Accessed October 8th, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Phidias.
[159] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 27.

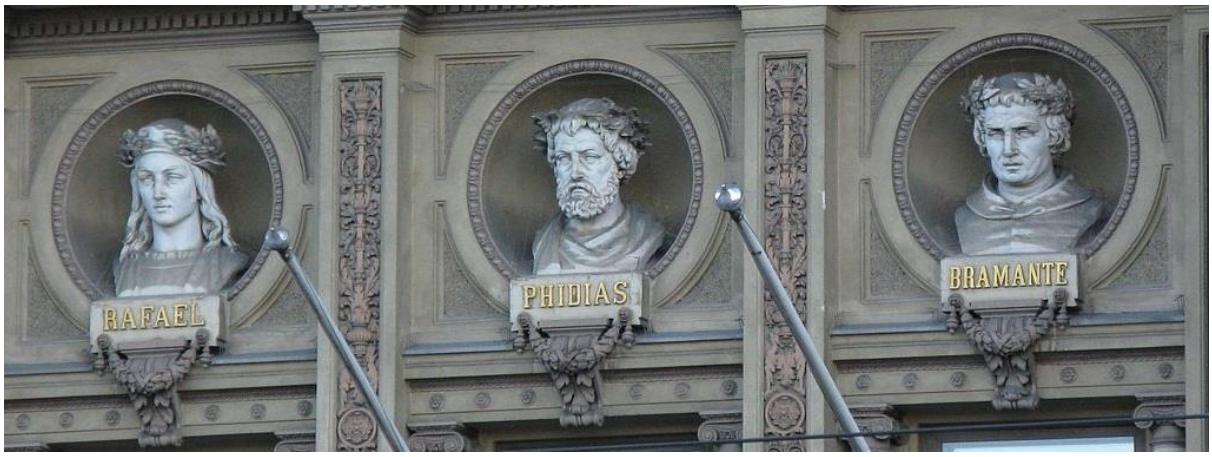
uniformed, these four feminine figures are each holding and representing something different. The caryatid on the furthest left of this central part of the façade is holding a miniature classical temple, complete with its own pillars and pediment, and she evidently represents architecture. The caryatid next to her, which is the most intriguing of the four, holds a mathematical compassing tool as well as a tablet with a hexagram upon it, said to symbolize the field of geometry in particular.[160] Across from her, the inner-most caryatid on the right side of the façade holds a paintbrush and palette, and the figure next to her, the furthest to the right, holds a hammer and the bust of a bearded man. Needless to say, these two figures represent fine art and sculpting.

It has been suggested that the norm-breaking caryatid who carries the compass and tablet was designed to represent newer non-traditional applied arts such as craftworks, decorative arts, and photography, along with the breaking the tradition of grouping in threes and the powers associated with trinities, in addition to the aforementioned suggestion of geometry.[161] Considering Estlander's desires for the building, wanting to merge fine and applied arts, this seems reasonable to believe. Additionally, having this fourth figure also allowed the building to display these caryatides in the first place, for it would have appeared incorrect to not have an equal number of them, as having only three would not have worked with the overall layout of the façade. As per their aforementioned Athenian origins, one need only consider these statues in alignment with the name of the building they are attached to. Their likeness to the caryatides of Erechtheion, one of the other major temples upon the Acropolis in Athens, is manifestly visible, especially when one considers that those original works too have an elevated position above the city, as do the caryatides here upon the top of the Ateneum art museum.

Above: The Ateneum as seen in 1890 upon its completion, as photographed by Daniel Nyblin. Upon the highest peak of its primary pediment is an acroterion portrait of Athena herself, the distant namesake of the building.[162] Not only is the building overall largely based upon numerous other art institutions from across Europe, but several of its more ornate elements were also completed in other cities such as Munich and Paris, further making it a truly European building as opposed to a solely Finnish one.[163] Sculptor Carl Sjöstrand, a Swede by

[160] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 14.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid, 16.
[163] Ibid, 12, 16.

birth, wanted the tympanum image within the pediment to have Väinämöinen as the central figure instead of the unnamed female who is believed to either represent Finland, Athena, or both as one.[164] Sjöstrand additionally desired a stronger Kalevala theme for the building overall.[165] Had his wishes been realised, the similarities with the Old Student House would be significantly closer, and the message being emitted by Ateneum would also replicate the same statement.



Above: A close-up image of the three masters: Raphael, Phidias, and Bramante, each of whom was selected to represent art, sculpting, and architecture respectively. The laurel wreaths around their heads emphasize them as some of the best and greatest in their fields. Their positioning together emphasizes one of the main commentaries of the Ateneum building, which is that these three fields which they represent should be laureled – such as the crowns they wear – as equals. Their positioning also thus reinforces the Latin inscription just below the pediment, which states that harmony is what allows things to prosper. Image sourced from the Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ateneum_Busts.jpg.

Above: The caryatides of the Erechtheion temple upon the Acropolis in Athens, overlooking the city from their elevated position. Although not the only example of this kind of unique ancient pillar, these seen here make for some of the most famous from the ancient world. Image sourced from the Wikimedia Commons and cropped to better fit this page: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erechtheion_-_caryatides_1.jpg.

Below: The caryatides of the Ateneum art museum, each representing a different field of study, three of which reinforce the fields represented by the busts of Raphael, Phidias, and Bramante. The caryatid with the compass and tablet is said to represent the newer emerging arts of the late 19th century. All four are additionally mounted with Composite pillar tops. Considering their elevated positions in

[164] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 16, 42.
[165] Ibid, 42.

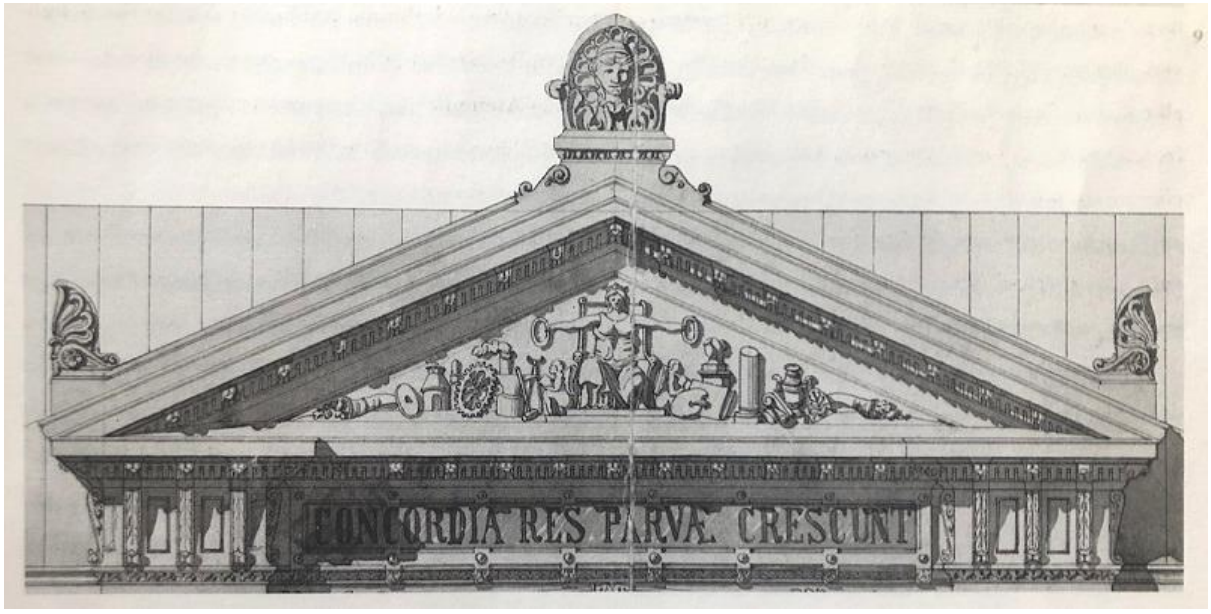
addition to their placements upon a building ultimately named after the Ancient Greek goddess Athena, these four statues appear to be very strongly evoking those seen upon the Erechtheion temple of the Acropolis. Photo scanned from page 13 of the 1991 book *Ateneum*, published by the Finnish National Gallery.

The statement of the building which ties all of these strongly European motifs and messages together is with the frieze. Immediately beneath the pediment, just above and between the caryatides, the Ateneum frieze is inscribed with the traditional Latin phrase "Concordia res parvae crescunt," which translates to "in concord small things flourish." It is actually a part of a larger quote, with the latter part being "discordia maximae dilabuntur," meaning that division destroys even the greatest of things. Similarly to the Latin phrase as seen at the top of the Student House, the usage of Latin here further reinforces and states, albeit indirectly from the actual text, that Finland is a European nation. This is done solely through the fact that Latin enjoys a position of unmatched ubiquitousness across the European continent, and across the wider west, due to the associations of prestige and power tied to the language from its highly influential Roman history. Although this phrase has existed across European cultures in various forms and uses since antiquity, being attributed to the Ancient Roman historian Sallust, it is believed to have been introduced to the late 19th century higher circles in Finland through Snellman, whom, if it was by, was insisting to the nationalistic socio-political groups of Finland at the time – the Fennomans and Svecomans in particular – that they must work together to see the Finnish nation prosper.[166]

[166] Wrede, Johan. "Estlander, Carl Gustaf." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2007. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3187. ; Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 35-36.

In regards to the building, this Sallustian quote was suggested to Höijer by Estlander.[167] This aligns well with what is known about Estlander, who in addition to being one of the key founders and proponents for the construction of this building who sought to have the various forms of the arts recognized equally, believed that Finland was a bilingual nation, and that Finland-Swedish culture was indispensable to the overall culture of the country.[168] This was also the view shared by Leo Mechelin, who not only frequently turned to Estlander regarding the construction and design of Ateneum, but who also believed that Finland's two languages should cooperate as equals in order to achieve independence from the Russian Empire.[169] Given that this building was constructed to house a great deal of the nation's most important cultural pieces, and with how these key figures behind the construction of the building were neither Fennomans nor Svecomans, one can see why Estlander proposed this fitting quote, especially given that perhaps the biggest socio-political issue of the day in Finland was with this ethno-cultural language strife, a by-product of the National Romantic movement. In essence, the quote not only reinforces the message being conveyed with the numerous elements of the building artistically speaking, but it also simultaneously comments politically on the cultural identities within the nation.

Below: a detailed proposal illustration from 1885 for the tympanum, frieze, and the acroterion ornaments upon the three triangular points of the pediment. The central female figure is believed to represent either Athena, the female embodiment of Finland, or both as one.[170] She extends laurel crowns to the different forms of arts, which she recognizes and rewards as equals. It would make sense that this female figure is the embodiment of Finland as opposed to Athena, given that the Greek goddess is also represented within the primary acroterion which sits at the highest point of the entire building.[171] The Latin phrase made famous by the Roman historian Sallust extends across the frieze, conveying a message that cooperation and harmoniousness are what will make the country of Finland prosperous, as togetherness has also made the arts prosper in bygone epochs – particularly in the Renaissance and classical eras. This phrase additionally speaks for both the tympanum sculpture and the building itself, the latter of which has been composed as one entity from numerous contributing elements and specialities which function together.



[167] Wrede, Johan. "Estlander, Carl Gustaf." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2007.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Helen, Tapio. "Mechelin, Leo." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.
[170] Arkio, Arnkil, Lehtinen, Levanto, Parko, and Ruotsalainen. *Ateneum*. 16.
[171] Ibid.

Chapter 5: The National Archives and the House of the Estates

As a continuation of the subjects analysed in the last chapter, the Finnish National Archives and House of the Estates buildings were also constructed during the National Romanticism period – the cultural golden age of Finnish art, architecture, and overall national identity-building. Like Ateneum, which they were chronologically built much closer to, both of these structures were also designed in the neo-Renaissance style, but these two were built predominantly for political and societal operational functions rather than for cultural purposes. This is emphasized by their locations, as these two adjacent structures sit just over from and behind the Senate Square, with both the upper part of the Helsinki Cathedral and the Topelia complex of the university visible from the street corner of Snellmaninkatu and Rauhankatu, which these buildings share. But just as the Ateneum and Student House buildings made key contemporary political statements through their appearances, which contributed to national formation by representing the character and sentiment of the Finnish people, so too did these newer government buildings also make political statements. The statements uttered by these buildings, however, were far more incoherent and controversial.

5.1: Gustaf Nyström – the Architect

Although there was significant crossover between the architects, sculptors, and other contributors to the constructions of the Student House and Ateneum buildings, the National Archives and the House of the Estates were both designed and constructed under Gustaf Nyström, another of Finland's leading late-19th century architects.[172] Nyström taught at the Helsinki University of Technology, and served as the institution's principal from 1907-1910 after being its vice-principal for eight years beforehand.[173] He had also played a key role in the architectural town planning of the Töölö district of western Helsinki.[174] In the words of Professor Ville Lukkarinen from his 1989 doctoral dissertation, *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*, Nyström had also "held the highest chair of the teaching of architecture in Finland from 1885 to 1917."[175] Birger Brunila, one of Nyström's contemporaries, commented with his passing in 1917 that "all of Finland's living and active architects have studied under Nyström,"

[172] Helander, Vilhelm. "Nyström, Gustaf." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3323

[173] Lukkarinen, Ville. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century: Jac. Ahrenberg and Gustaf Nyström*. Helsinki: Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys, 1989. 28-29.

[174] Helander, Vilhelm, Outi Karemaa, Juha Lemström, and Jukka-Pekka Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. Helsinki: Edita, 1999. 168.

[175] Ibid.

which at the time included noteworthy names in the circles of Finnish architecture such as Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren, Eliel Saarinen (father to Eero Saarinen), and Lars Sonck.[176]

Nyström himself was the pupil of yet another key architect of Helsinki, named Frans Anatolius Sjöström, who had also educated Theodor Höijer, the architect behind Ateneum.[177] Like many of his contemporaries, Nyström had also studied architecture abroad in a larger and more prestigious European power, having received his education in Vienna under Heinrich von Ferstel, one of imperial Austria's most important 19th century architects.[178] Following this, he spent time in Italy as a part of an architectural study expedition, which was the first of many he made, with those following being in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, England – all of which are countries with strong neoclassical presences.[179] Nyström also revered the Senate Square and Imperial Alexander University works of Engel, the structures of whom he sought to compliment harmoniously with his own.[180] In fact he was so taken with Engel's design of the National Library (which was at the time still the library of the Imperial Alexander University) that he said "It will forever remain a model for the monumental architecture of both the present and future in Finland."[181] In Lukkarinen's own words, "Nyström's texts show that for him, classicism was not only the "style of the past," but the style of styles, architecture itself."[182] Furthermore, even well before the writings of Sir John Summerson became circulated, Nyström understood and emphasized that "architecture is a *language* and in order to be understood a language must be based on tradition."[183] Additionally, Lukkarinen has noted that "Nyström's primary intention was not only to maintain the classical tradition of form but also to develop it."[184] With all of this in mind, Nyström was also a teacher who relied heavily on the history of architecture, he was unenthused with Finnish National Romanticism and its architectural advancements, and because of this, many of his pupils found his beliefs and teachings to be outdated.[185] Because of this admiration he had for his predecessor along with his focuses on historical architecture and disinterest in the National Romanticism movement, this chapter will partly address the National Archives and House of the Estates buildings in

[176] Ibid.
[177] Helander, Vilhelm. "Nyström, Gustaf." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. ; Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Sjöström, Frans (1840 - 1885)." Biografiakeskus, March 23rd 2007. https://kansallisbiografia.fi/kansallisbiografia/henkilo/3637.
[178] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 168.
[179] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 29.
[180] Ibid, 30.
[181] Ibid, 66.
[182] Ibid, 70.
[183] Ibid, 67.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 167.

conjunction with Engel's constructs, evaluating whether or not Nyström's additions do indeed cooperate visually, based on their outer designs and decorations along with the messages which those elements emit.

5.2: The Conceptual Histories Behind these Buildings

Both the National Archives and House of Estates buildings were the products of necessity, and in addition to their adjacent locations, both institutions trace their origins back to the earlier years of the Grand Duchy of Finland and to authorizations made by Alexander I. The National Archives building takes its origins from an order signed by the emperor in 1816, which established the permanent position of an archivist within the Finnish Senate.[186] This position was originally assigned to the former capital of Turku, but it was moved to the new capital of Helsinki in 1819, and three years after that the office moved into the newly built Senate building after its completion in 1822.[187] From this, and as stated on the website of the National Archives of Finland itself:

"The archives of the Senate were divided into two sections. The old archives included documents acquired from Sweden on the basis of the Hamina peace treaty from 1809. These included documents related to governance from recent times, as well as other documents dating from the Middle Ages onwards… The new archives housed documents from the Senate. The task of this archive was much like the one the National Archives has today: to ensure that documents belonging to the national cultural heritage are preserved and to promote their use for research, as well as guiding the records management and archives administration of authorities."[188]

With time, these two archival branches gradually came to need an institution of their own, and since this office operated directly under the Senate for public purposes and services, the new building was commissioned for construction by the Grand Duchy of Finland itself. This was done under the state archivist at the time, Reinhold Hausen, who had been tasked by the Senate to find an appropriate spot along with a capable architect.[189]

For this, Hausen approached the locally respected Gustaf Nyström, who is also said to have been his favourite architect, and whose drafts and plans were approved by the Senate the same year the construction process began in 1885.[190] Notably, Hausen, who was born in Åland and whose family relocated to Helsinki following the Franco-British bombardment of Bomarsund in 1854 during

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[186] Nuorteva, Jussi. "On the 200th anniversary of the Finnish National Archives Service." The National Archives of Finland. News. Article published November 25th 2016. https://arkisto.fi/news/1838/3728/On-the-200th-anniversary-of-the-Finnish-National-Archives-Service/d,ajankohtaista-en.

[187] The National Archives of Finland. "Arkistolaitos juhli merkkivuottaan." News. Article published December 13th 2016. https://arkisto.fi/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=1860&cntnt01returnid=61.

[188] Ibid.

[189] Litzen, Veikko. "Hausen, Reinhold." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3475.

[190] Ibid.

the Crimean War, is said to have been dismissive towards the Fennoman movement and its fanaticism, and as mentioned in the last subchapter, Nyström, another Swedish-speaking Finn, is also believed to have been disinterested with this patriotic phenomenon.[191] It is unclear from their respective biographical pages from *Biografiskt lexikon för Finland* as to whether or not these two were actually Svecomans, however, their known mutual beliefs may be some clue as to why Nyström was deemed Hausen's favourite, and additionally as to why Nyström's two neighbouring constructs look particularly traditional. Lukkarinen has also noted in another of his works that Hausen and Nyström were both known to have been politically "Swedish oriented."[192] Although the building has since been expanded twice, this chapter will focus on Nyström's designs, intentions, and constructions, in order to identify and analyse exactly what messages and statements the building's primary façade was created to express.

The process for constructing the adjacent House of the Estates, which began a year later in 1886, was necessitated because of the needs of the three lower estates of the Grand Duchy. After their original gathering for the Diet of Porvoo in March of 1809, during which the representatives of the four estates of Finland swore their allegiance to Alexander I even before the Finnish War had concluded, the estates did not convene again for another fifty-four years, from which they then began to do so regularly.[193] When the Diet convened for their second meeting in 1863, the Nobility were the only estate with their own respective house: *Ritarihuone* – the House of the Nobility – which had only just been completed under the architect Georg Theodor Chiewitz, another of Finland's leading architects (who had made himself better known westward in cities like Turku and Pori).[194] Thus Ritarihuone was rented out to the other estates, but this arraignment was far from ideal, especially given that the estates members were often uncomfortably and tightly gathered inside, and since their options were particularly limited with what the city of Helsinki could offer at the time.[195] Even the newly built Ateneum building served as the gathering place for the three lower estates once in 1888, which accommodated their sizes as needed, but this naturally could not become their new gathering place.[196] Between the second convening of 1863 and all of those which followed until 1888, the topic of where the three lower estates ought to be housed and how the building should be styled was discussed at each and every gathering.[197] Evidently it was necessity

[191] Ibid.
[192] Lukkarinen. *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus = Riksarkivets hundraåriga byggnad*. 89.
[193] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 161.
[194]Ibid. ; Valanto, Sirkka. "Chiewitz, Georg Theodor Policron." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3168.
[195] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 161.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

which drove the three estates to jointly purchase their plot of land, and it was necessity that brought the House of the Estates into existence.

Intriguingly, the reason Nyström was nominated for the construction of this building was not nearly as simple or straightforward as his selection for the National Archive building, but rather it was a point of significant controversy. Before the construction process began, a competition was held to determine the design of this new building, and Nyström was one of the four architects invited to participate.[198] The finalists of this competition were the proposals of Nyström and another architect named Theodor Decker, whose design was favoured over Nyström's because of its originality, however, Nyström's proposal was ultimately chosen.[199] According to Lukkarinen, this was because Nyström's submission was selected by "the political decision-making body, the so-called Deputation for the House of the Estates," as opposed to the jury of experts who had favoured Decker's entry.[200] Although this was likely maddening to a handful of those involved, and most likely to Decker in particular, this was actually not the main point of controversy with Nyström's proposal. Rather, it was from public accusations which surfaced soon after that Nyström's entry was a direct copy of his own former teacher Sjöström's 1884 proposal for the House of the Estates to be located on the city's Observatory Hill – a plan which had been abandoned in 1885 by the Diet which met that year, because of its high costs and various other political disputes.[201] To make matters even more tense and the accusations heavier upon Nyström, Sjöström had also just passed away that same year.[202] As Lukkarinen writes, Nyström was "morally outraged," and he presented a staunch defence against these accusations of copying.[203] Despite this, and although the original floorplans put forward by Nyström have not been preserved, Lukkarinen has further stated that the "written descriptions suggest that they correspond nevertheless to a great degree to those of Sjöström's project," but Nyström had "especially stressed to his friend J. B. Blomkvist that his floorplan different completely from that by Sjöström, although the floorplan type… is clearly the same as in Sjöström's case."[204]

As yet another point of interest which adds to this controversy, and contrastingly with Lukkarinen's dissertation, the 1999 publication *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*, issued

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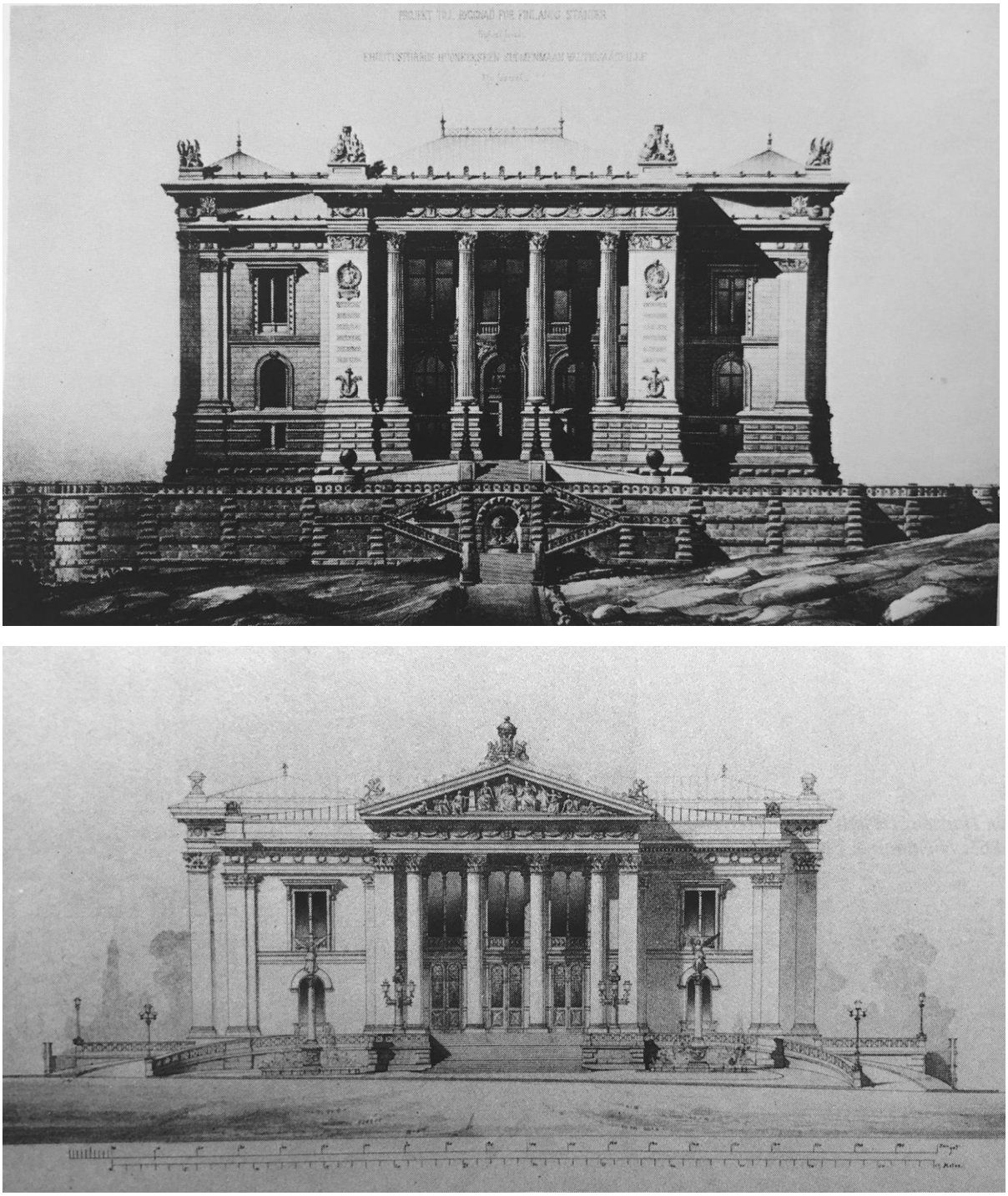
[198] Ibid, 167.
[199] Ibid. ; Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Sjöström, Frans (1840 - 1885)." Biografiakeskus, March 23rd 2007. https://kansallisbiografia.fi/kansallisbiografia/henkilo/3637.
[200] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 116.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Viljo, Eeva Maija. "Sjöström, Frans (1840 - 1885)." Biografiakeskus, March 23rd 2007.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.

by Edita, states this controversy Lukkarinen has described in a notably different light. Helander et al. stated that "Nyström made beautiful use of the plan bequeathed on him by his master," and that "the House of the Estates competition committee had…" only "… pointed out the lack of originality in Nyström's proposal."[205] Needless to say, this is a stark contrast from how Lukkarinen has presented the scenario, let alone this description also omits the fact that, as Lukkarinen pointed out, Nyström went to great lengths to defend his honour and reputation in the face of these heavy and serious accusations which were levelled at him. In fact, Lukkarinen mentioned that in 1898, seven years after the completion of the building, Nyström wrote to his acquaintance Johan Jakob Tikkanen, the first art history professor in Finland, that "copying, regardless of motive, is seen by us architects as impermissible and greatly detrimental to one's personal value and esteem."[206] Given Lukkarinen's formerly stated elaborations on the striking and manifest similarities between Nyström's proposal and that of his former teacher's, this could just have been Nyström defending himself further, but it is also perfectly possible that he meant this sincerely. Regardless of that, however, all architecture is essentially and virtually copying when it really comes down to it, and this is especially true for classical architecture. The first chapter of this thesis aimed to demonstrate this by detailing the development of classical architecture throughout the antiquity, in which these ancient societies sought to replicate one another's architectural advancements and styles for the gains of their own respective societies to be recognized as legitimate and worthy civilizations. As seen with the words and beliefs of Nyström himself, along with the constructs which have been discussed thus far in this thesis, this desire to copy and evoke the prestige and glory associated with the ancient Mediterranean through the medium of architecture was still very much alive and well in the 19th century.

Below: The main façade for Frans Anatolius Sjöström's 1884 proposal for the House of the Estates, when the plan was originally to have the building upon the Observatory Hill in the city's Ullanlinna neighbourhood. Sjöström died in 1885, and thus no commentary could be given by him regarding the distinct similarities between this 1884 proposal and his former pupil Gustaf Nyström's for the Snellmaninkatu location from soon after. Image scanned and cropped from page 165 of Ville Lukkarinen's 1989 doctoral dissertation, *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century.*

[205] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 169.
[206] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 116. ; Reitala, Aimo. "Tikkanen, Johan Jakob." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3666.



Above: Nyström's design for the House of the Estates for Snellmaninkatu, from August 1887. With a striking similarity to the proposal of his former educator, this design of Nyström's was selected to be constructed, although some alterations have been made from this plan. Perhaps it was indeed heavily copied, or perhaps it was the result of coincidence from being educated by Sjöström; Lukkarinen seems to believe the former. The visual similarities are certainly self-evident. Regardless, the most noticeable difference between the two proposals is with Nyström's inclusion of a pediment above the Corinthian columns, which Nyström himself claimed was one of the first to be erected in Finland since the time of Engel, whom he highly admired.[207] Image scanned and cropped from page 164 of Ville Lukkarinen's 1989 doctoral dissertation, *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century.*

5.3: The Finnish National Archives: Architectural Meanings and Messages

[207] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 115.

Lukkarinen has determined in his dissertation that both the National Archives and House of the Estates buildings are from the "late historicism" period of Finnish architectural history, which lasted from 1880-1915, and which followed the diverse classicism era of the 1840s to the 1870s.[208] Given that the National Archives building is the senior of the two, as discussed in the former subchapter, it is only appropriate to analyse it first.

According to Lukkarinen, "the National Archives building has always been considered Nyström's finest artistic achievement."[209] One of the ways which Nyström himself was proud of this building was because, as he publicly stated in writing, "it employs the architectural style in which most of the capital's most beautiful public buildings have been designed," and he especially sought to stress with this that he was the first architect since Engel to use the colossal orders for the construction of a building.[210] Presuming that this latter claim is indeed true, which is not unreasonable to do given Nyström's respected renown and knowledge as perhaps the leading architect in Helsinki of his time, this is something of significance. The columns which stand at the front and middle of the building, and which jut out from the main part of the structure as its avant-corps, do noticeably stand out most to the eye of the beholder when looking at the façade, and especially so from a diagonal angle. Like Summerson said (as mentioned in Chapter 4.2), colonnades visually dominate and control the buildings to which they are attached, and this is certainly true for those which Nyström had given this front and centre position.[211] Perhaps more than any other feature of this structure, these pillars state that this is a classical building, and from that, a classical building which follows in the footsteps of and which speaks the same architectural language as a great many buildings which came before it, dating far back into antiquity. This is especially worth noting considering the interior functions and purposes of this structure as an archival institution – one which directly deals with the recording, preserving, and studying of history. To construct such a headquarters in this pronounced style is to very openly state that this nation too is one of historical worth. In addition to this, Lukkarinen noted in another work titled *Kansallisarkisto: Entinen Valtionarkisto: Ulkoasun Rakennushistoriaselvitys 2015* (i.e. 'The National Archives: An Investigation into the Façades and Construction History 2015' in English) that this avant-corps in particular is influenced from French works of the same era and movement in classicism, and furthermore that this building is overall just as much an example of French neo-Renaissance stylization as it is a

[208] Ibid, 27-28.
[209] Lukkarinen. *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus = Riksarkivets hundraåriga byggnad*. 88.
[210] Ibid, 115.
[211] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 20.

continuation of Engel's works in the Senate Square.[212] Additionally, Lukkarinen noted in the same work that the building also resembles French-influenced structures as seen in Sweden.[213] Through this, he also stated that this very well may be suggestive and representative of both Hausen's and Nyström's ideals and political opinions, both of whom pointed to Finland's historical connections with Sweden, and through that neighbouring conduit, to Western Europe more broadly.[214]

Aside from these latter points, however, and by looking at the structure more in-depth, it can be seen that a great many features from the exterior alone support and emit this same pronounced message of classicism which aims to give the institution legitimacy. These six columns which extent across the avant-corps, for example, have been styled with fluted shafts topped with Corinthian capitals (with capital being the architectural word for the head of a pillar, the origin of which extends from the Latin *caput*, literally meaning 'head').[215] Looking back to the Senate Square, and especially to the palatial Senate building, we can see by comparison that the columns there were far plainer, with no extra expenses spent nor any additional efforts made to embellish them. The number of columns is shared, however, with both buildings hosting six. In addition to this, the National Archives building is adorned with Corinthian pilasters all across its façade and upon the sides of the structure, the style of which can also be seen on the Senate building, although those, as mentioned back in Chapter 3.4, are only present upon the wings of the Senate house. As mentioned earlier, Corinthian columns, along with fluted shafts, are purely aesthetical choices which have no bearings towards the structural integrities of the buildings which employ them. In addition to being aesthetically or culturally motivated, however, they are also chosen – even if unintentionally – to signify that extra expenses have been accrued for the construction of such a building, and through this, that the financiers had the funds necessary to make this choice. This in itself is a statement; one which asserts that those who paid for this building, in this case, the government of the Grand Duchy of Finland, was an organized body which had the financial capability to pay for such expenses, regardless of their practicality or structural contribution to the building overall.

The building's bottom and entryway share the general supportive style seen amongst several of the neoclassical constructs in Helsinki, with large rectangular concrete squares and rectangles assembled in an orderly fashion, and with the absence of a stylobate (that which Summerson has

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[212] Bonsdorff, Mikko, and Kati Winterhalter. *Kansallisarkisto: Entinen Valtionarkisto: Ulkoasun Rakennushistoriaselvitys 2015.* Helsinki: Senaatti kiinteistöt, 2015. 19.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Ibid. ; Lukkarinen. *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus = Riksarkivets hundraåriga byggnad*. 89.
[215] Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. "Capital (noun)." Oxford University Press. Page accessed June 2nd 2020. https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/capital_1?q=capital.

defined very simply as "the steps under a portico or colonnade").[216] Intriguingly, although this building was financed by the Senate of the Grand Duchy, the rectangular shaping of the entryway with its three doors does not match the appearance of the Senate building, but rather that of the university's Main Building. One would think that rounded archways would have been picked over this, not only because the building was financed by the Senate, but also because it shares its Corinthian motifs, however, given the notably angled rectangular shape of and with both the façade and this building overall, Nyström probably sought to pair the entryway with the structure's dominant angular form.

The building's top and its respective statements, however, are of far more interest than the concrete substructure. Seen above the six Corinthian columns and the numerous pilasters is the entablature, the frieze of which is considerably plain in comparison to that which can be seen on the Senate building. As mentioned in Chapter 3.4, the Senate building's frieze is of a floral design, which complements the character of the building's Corinthian columns and pilasters. This frieze upon the National Archives, however, displays only a pattern of ornamental laurel wreaths, with one wreath per column from a front view of the façade, and with two wreaths on both ends of the frieze. Another wreath has been placed above both of the sides of the avant-corps, sitting over the first and sixth of the Corinthian columns respectively. As mentioned in Chapter 1, which discussed the ancient developments of Graeco-Roman European identity alongside the evolution of classical architecture, laurel wreaths were a symbol of revered importance in ancient Mediterranean symbolism, largely identified with the basileis, the caesars, and the gods. Thus to place such wreaths decoratively upon this structure is to evoke that symbolism, along with the legitimacy and power associated with it, even if indirectly. Considering Nyström's keen admiration for classicism, it would be highly unlikely that he himself would not have made this connection, especially given the strongly Roman-based appearance of this structure.

On that note in particular, two of the strongest suggestions and evocations of ancient culture and legitimacy are with the inscription at the top of the building and its accompanying statue, both elements of which are similar to those discussed with the Student House and Ateneum buildings respectively. Unlike the Latin inscriptions upon those two similarly-aged structures, the inscription upon the National Archive building is neither a famous nor an inspiring quote, which also informs us of the intent behind its implementation in the first place. Rather it simply reads "Archivum Finlandiae Publicum," which translates very well in English as the Public Archives of Finland, and which merely demonstrates the functional purpose of the building overall. Despite the

[216] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 132.

fact that this is clearly not angled with a socio-political meaning behind it which comments on the issues occurring in Finland at the time the structure was built, there is meaning with the deliberate choice of Latin, and this meaning is the exact same as that which the entire building states with its overall design – that this is an institution which derives and descends from the ancient civilizations and their advances, and from that, that this nation does too. It is not a pronounced socio-political statement like those seen upon Student House or Ateneum buildings, but this is a subtle subtext it emits nonetheless.

The statue atop the attic storey, with its figures clad in togas like peoples of Mediterranean antiquity, is self-evidently also there to bolster the desired connection to the ancient world. Additionally, the statue doubly represents the building's functions and aims. This crowning piece made of cement and named as "Finland surrounded by History and Antiquity" (which was replaced with a soapstone replica in 1913) was the work of the aforementioned Carl Sjöstrand, who had also sculpted the tympanum, the neo-Renaissance busts of Raphael, Phidias, and Bramante, and the four caryatides upon Ateneum's main façade.[217] Although Sjöstrand's was responsible for this statue's physical creation, neither the design nor the message were his. In his 1990 book *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus* (i.e. '100 years of The National Archives Building' in English), Lukkarinen explains that the statue's design can be seen on Nyström's 1885 and 1887 blueprints, and that Sjöstrand's role was simply just for bringing Nyström's idea to life.[218] Furthermore, Lukkarinen states that Nyström likely based the design for this statue off of the pair of sculptures visible upon the façade of what is now the National Library of Finland, as designed by Engel.[219] This is a reasonable speculation not only because the figurines upon the library were fashioned in typical classical styles, but also because of Nyström's well-known reverence for this neighbouring building and its creator.

Of the three female figures which compose this statue, and based on its title of "Finland surrounded by History and Antiquity," it can be determined that the standing central figure is a representative characterisation of the nation, with the characterisations of history and antiquity being those which respectively surround this embodiment of Finland. Lukkarinen has essentially also stated this with the titling of his chapter which discusses this statue, which he has named as "Suomi-neito katonharjalla," which translates closely to "the Finnish maiden on the rooftop" in a singular sense.[220] Although it is not immediately obvious which of the other two figures is which, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the characterisation of history is seated to the right of Finland (the

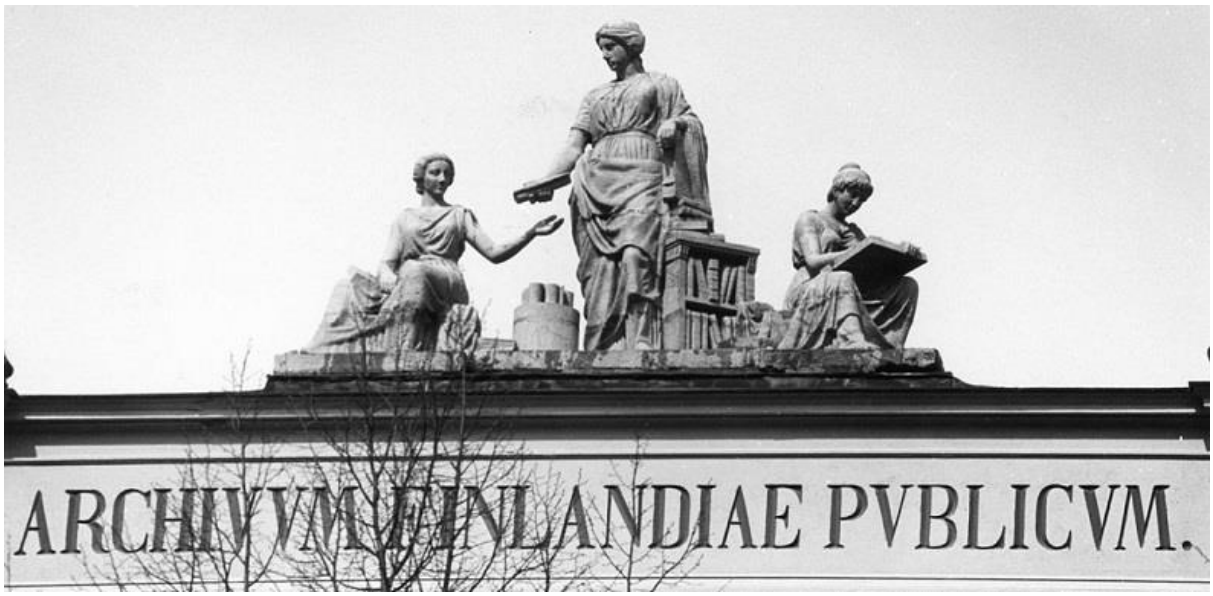
[217] Lukkarinen. *Valtionarkiston satavuotias rakennus = Riksarkivets hundraåriga byggnad*. 34.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid, 32-34.

onlooker's left), with antiquity therefore seated to Finland's left (the onlooker's right). This reasoning is based on the ordering listed within the statue's given title in alignment with the fact that said title is a part of a language system which reads from left to right. Were it the other way around, titled as 'Finland surrounded by Antiquity and History,' than the opposite case could be made with the same logic. Regardless, one could argue that the representation of Finland as an ancient Mediterranean maiden – and perhaps even in a similar vein to ancient portrayals of Hera or Athena – is essentially a statement being made about the respectable civility of Finland as a fully-fledged European nation within its own right. It is absolutely not an embodiment of Finland in the late 19th century, and this statue is clearly meant to draw the minds of onlookers to Ancient Greece and Rome. After all, should the central figure of Finland herself be allusive to Athena, the patron goddess of Athens well-known for her associations with wisdom, knowledge, and the arts, it would make sense that she could or would be bequeathing another (who is notably in a less dominant posture) with a scroll, which is exactly what the figure of Finland is doing to the figure representing history. At present there seems to be nothing from the available literature to suggest this, however, this speculation is grounded in the fact that these are the kinds of associations which can be easily made through the imposed evocations of ancientness.

As can be seen from the features of the building highlighted thus far, it is apparent that Nyström sought to evoke a strong sense of ancientness – and specifically Romanness – with this structure in addition to the more contemporary trends he included with its design. Along with the connections the building evidently appears to have with the Senate house, it is also worth returning to what was mentioned earlier, with how Nyström revered Engel's university library above all else. Although the overall connection with many buildings of the Senate Square and its nearby area is manifest, especially since many of the Senate Square buildings employ the Corinthian orders, Nyström himself had stated that there was only one building fit for basing the National Archives off of, and that was Engel's library.[221] From this, Nyström's efforts of styling the building to be ultimately Roman were doubled through also imitating Engel's works, especially with the library and Senate buildings. In the 1990 book *Universitas Helsingiensis 350: Past and Present 1640-1990*, Klinge has noted that Engel based the library building in particular off of Roman baths, and in addition what Pöykkö pointed out as mentioned earlier in Chapter 3.4, Engel's application of the Corinthian orders was yet another attempt to evoke the style of Ancient Rome.[222]

[221] Bonsdorff and Winterhalter. *Kansallisarkisto: Entinen Valtionarkisto: Ulkoasun Rakennushistoriaselvitys 2015.* 19.
[222] Klinge, Matti, ed. Rainer Knapas. *Universitas Helsingiensis 350: Past and Present 1640-1990*. Helsinki: Otava, 1990. 20. ; Lilius, Henrik. *Helsingin Helmi.* 157.

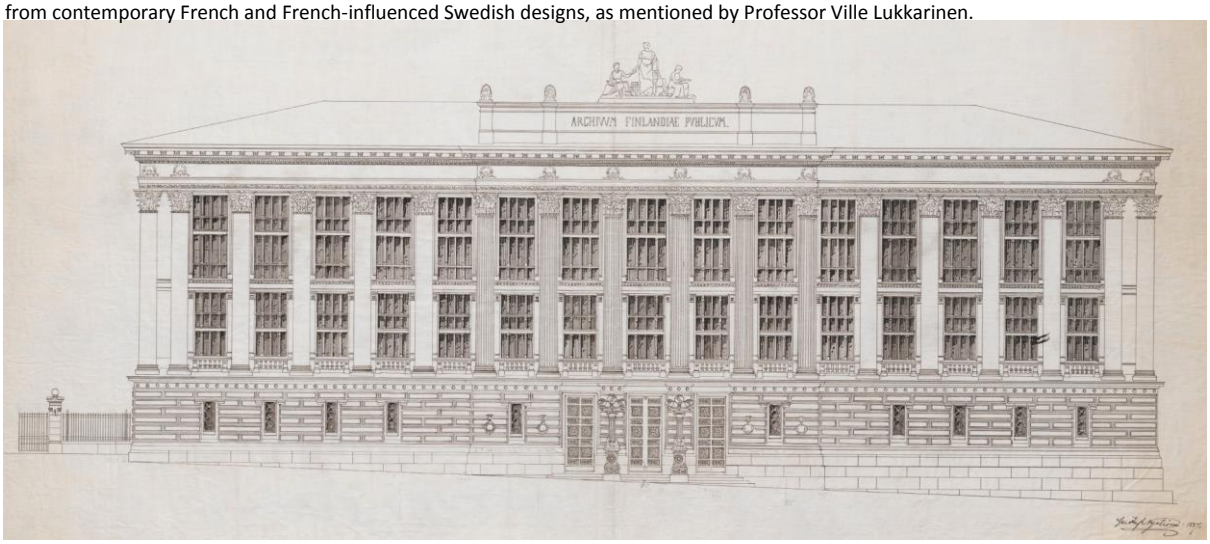
With all of these elements taken into consideration, the message the National Archive building emits is manifestly clear; the legitimacy the building seeks to evoke and channel on behalf of the institution it houses is explicitly that of Ancient Rome. Given the number of embellishments and elements of the building which have been covered, the reverence for Rome is perhaps more evident with this structure than any other which has been discussed in this thesis thus far. On such veneration, Sir John Summerson said the following, in a way which aptly describes the attitudes and views of those who have made such explicitly and pronouncedly Roman imitation structures from the Renaissance era onward until the present day: the belief that "Rome was the greatest; Rome knew best."[223] This certainly applies to Nyström, whom as mentioned by Lukkarinen, believed that classical architecture was the pinnacle of architecture itself.[224]



Above: The attic storey and statues atop the National Archives of Finland. By simply stating 'Archivum Finlandiae Publicum,' the Latin inscription here does not just state the role of the institution down beneath it, but it also reinforces the many motifs of the building overall, such as those seen above with the statues, which state that this institution comes by distance from Ancient Roman traditions.

[223] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 89.
[224] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 70.

Below: Nyström's 1887 design plan for the National Archives building – that which was followed through with, and which the building takes its appearance from. In addition to strongly evoking Ancient Rome with a great many of its elements, this structure also borrows from contemporary French and French-influenced Swedish designs, as mentioned by Professor Ville Lukkarinen.



5.4: The House of the Estates: Architectural Meanings and Messages

The House of the Estates building, which was completed in 1890 along with its adjacent counterpart, but which only opened for use the following year, is notably more regal in appearance. In addition to this, it is not only a highly archetypal classical building as seen from its façade, but it is also noticeably more Ancient Greek and 19th-century Austrian in terms of its motifs and its inspirations, as opposed to the largely Roman-influenced National Archive building.[225] All the while, this building does still display some elements which are of Roman influences and origins. Because of these notable differences, there is much to be analysed about what this building states and evokes through its outer appearance.

Similarly to its neighbouring archive building, perhaps the most pronouncedly classical element of this building is also with the columns which dominate the front and centre of the façade. These too upon the House of the Estates, like those of the Senate building, the Helsinki Cathedral, and the National Library, are of the ornate and floral Corinthian style which largely evokes Ancient Rome. Like the National Archives only, these columns also have fluted shafts, which along with the more elaborate Corinthian capitals displays and states that no expenses were spared for the construction of this building which strongly evokes the appearance of an ancient temple, which is something Nyström sought for the structure, as he noted during its construction.[226] These four typical cylindrical columns are paired on both sides by large rectangular columns which share the Corinthian capitals, however, it is the pediment sitting above these columns, along with its highly

[225] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 167.
[226] Ibid, 169.

detailed tympanum, which truly appears to dominate the look of this building. This is especially so because this pediment along with the orders completes the archetypal look of an ancient classical building, and this look is what allows for the strongest evocation of classical design.

The tympanum was the work of Emil Wikström, an accomplished sculptor.[227] An earlier 1889 proposal by Sjöstrand was not approved of, and thus in 1892 a competition was held in order to determine what the tympanum for this building should be.[228] The theme for this contest was "the development of the Finnish people through battle and work up to the first Diet of 1809," and Wikström's piece, which he titled "Borgå den 23 mars 1809" (Porvoo on the 23rd of March 1809) was the winner over five other entries, including those by the aforementioned Aspelin-Haapkylä, Tikkanen, Sjöstrand, and two others named Johan Jacob Ahrenberg and Sebastian Gripenberg.[229] When this nationalistically-themed tympanum cast of bronze in Paris went up over a decade after the end of the competition in 1903, it happened to come at a politically tense period, as the Grand Duchy had been undergoing a considerable period of Russification under the Governor General at the time, Nikolaj Ivanovich Bobrikov.[230] The particulars of the tympanum's design were thus considerably more politically impactful, even though they were not necessarily originally meant to be so, as Wikström's design had been approved of several years before Bobrikov became the Governor General. Because of this, and because of the tense political situation, the unveiling ceremony for this addition to complete the building in its entirety was reduced, and only official representatives were present.[231] Now that we have highlighted that the tympanum's conception was particularly noteworthy, we can assess it for what it states and represents based off of the motifs and the competition theme which was provided.

In a way which cooperates with the overall neo-Renaissance classical style of the building at large, and which is perhaps also microcosmic of it in its entirety, the tympanum too is composed of both classical and 19th century motifs.[232] Further, judging by Wikström's creation, he followed the guidelines of the competition very closely, as his statue does indeed display themes of conflict and industriousness along with representing the events of the Diet of 1809. Starting from the bottom right corner of the tympanum and going inward to the centre, the figures were dubbed by Wikström as "the battle," "the atonement," and "towards a better future," which take influence from the

[227] Lindgren, Liisa. "Wikström, Emil." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3688.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid. ; Helsinki Art Museum (HAM). "Alexander I and The Porvoo diet 1809." https://www.hamhelsinki.fi/en/sculpture/aleksanteri-i-ja-porvoon-valtiopaivat-1809-emil-wikstrom/.
[230] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 153, 162.
[231] Lindgren, Liisa. "Wikström, Emil." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014.
[232] Ibid.

famous French sculptor François Rude's best known statue *La Marseillaise*.[233] Given the visibly ancient motifs of Rude's statue, this is one of the ways in which Wikström's work takes from classical design, albeit specifically through 19th-century French neoclassical design. From the bottom left corner and towards the middle the statues are depictions of the Finnish people's working natures, with the figures dubbed as "kantele player," "the first teaching," "agriculture," "trade," "industry," "art," and "science."[234] The most pronounced of all of these figures, however, is that of Alexander I, emerging from his throne, positioned in the top and middle of the tympanum and pediment, holding one of the most visually dominant positions of the entire building overall, second only to the acroterion directly overhead.

Although it is possible that the competition topic of "the development of the Finnish people through battle and work up to the first Diet of 1809" was chosen to utter a certain kind of nationalistic statement on the unique position and privileges of the Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire under the increasingly russified times towards the end of the nineteenth century, it is quite difficult to say whether or not this was deliberately done. After all, by including the Diet of 1809 in the tympanum image, it would simply be including the history of how things came to be, and a display of how the estates – who this building was for – came to have their positions and privileges. It is also equally difficult to say simply by assessing Wikström's piece whether or not he himself explicitly designed his sculpture with extra emphasis towards Finnish nationalism, or if he was merely fulfilling the requirements of the outline to the best degree in order to gain a personally beneficial employment opportunity. Regardless, with Alexander I's dominant positioning upon the tympanum, there is an implication that it was he who brought Finland into good order, and this is reinforced with how the men of the four estates surrounding him are standing attentively towards him, while many other figures throughout the sculpture are not doing so. While those four are steadfast and orderly, those around them, save for the classically-designed women behind them and a few other figures closer to the centre, many other figures are displayed as attending to their own affairs, whereas Alexander I can be interpreted as a great unifier. The inclusion of the aforementioned element of the piece which Wikström dubbed as "the battle" especially emphasizes that things were unwell within the land before Alexander I came and reorganized it under his reign.

Furthermore, displaying Alexander I – he who gave this autonomous Grand Duchy its special rights and privileges – certainly seems like a statement in itself against the russification attempts which were ongoing towards the end of the century. One of the ways this is additionally emphasized

[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid.

is with the visible tablet being held behind two of the estates' representatives, and in the hand of one of the classical-looking female figures. Inscribed on the tablet is "Lex" with the years 1734 and 1772. This is a direct display of the fact that Alexander I acknowledged and respected the former laws of the Kingdom of Sweden, which he allowed the Grand Duchy to continue to operate with – an act which was seen as a considerably generous by this new emperor, and one which respected the semiautonomous the Grand Duchy would have.[235] Considering the day and age of russification from when this sculpture was completed for public display, this certainly appears to be a political statement being made by the Grand Duchy. In addition to this inscription, another pair of Latin words can be seen upon the capitals of the larger outer rectangular columns, both of which are the three letter words of 'Lex and 'Ius' – law and justice. With their placements upon these larger outer pillars, there is an implication that these are in fact the pillars of the society which uphold all else above and within it. Adding these to the former inscription which mentions the law, these too can be taken as a statement against the russification policies, subtly reminding that this semiautonomous land has its own rights and laws which ought to be respected, especially given that such rights and laws were originally given by the emperor who established this nation. There is also another Latin inscription worth nothing which mentions the laws of Finland – that which sits just below the tympanum, and which reads as "Leges et instituta Fenniæ solenniter confirmatæ," which translates well into English as "the laws and institutions of Finland solemnly confirmed." This statement not only reflects the images portrayed in the tympanum above, but also indicates the purpose of the building overall, as a place constructed directly for practicing those laws and institutions as granted by Alexander I.

Moving on from these select Roman influences, the building is, as mentioned, also notably influenced from Ancient Greek and Austrian structures of the 19th century. Perhaps the most notable of these Greek influences is with the building's frieze, which is visible immediately below the façade's entablature and above the large rectangular windows with overhead mouldings on both sides of the portico/avant-corps. The figures portrayed upon the frieze all appear identifiably Hellenistic, with armoured charioteers wearing helmets of Ancient Greek styles, with a great many clad in togas, and even with two painted-on pillars present on each side of the building's portico, closest into the middle of the façade. In addition to this, Lukkarinen has stated in his aforementioned dissertation that "the frieze… and all above its location are obvious references to the Vienna House of Parliament."[236] Coming back to the tympanum, if one compares that of the

[235] Kirby, David. *A Concise History of Finland*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 123.
[236] Lukkarinen. *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century*. 118.

House of the Estates by Wikström with the tympanum atop the Austrian Parliament Building in Vienna, the influence of the design is abundantly clear due to the posturing and positioning of many of the figures upon it, especially of those nearest to the centre figure who is also emerging from his throne with similarly positioned hands to how Alexander I has been portrayed by Wikström. Furthermore, Lukkarinen has pointed out that Nyström's original design plan from 1887 (that which can be seen above in comparison with Sjöström's similar design from 1884) also employed the same ramping design which approaches the building's entrance from both sides as can be seen with the Parliament Building in Vienna.[237] Given Nyström's evident desires to model the House of the Estates off of the Austrian Parliament Building, which appear to have come as an extension of his years spent in Vienna, it would seem that he formed over the course of his career a notable tendency to take strong influences from the works of other architects.

Below: A cropped, close-up view of the right side of the façade from a beholder's perspective. The Corinthian capital of the rectangular rightmost pillar has 'Ius' (justice) displayed within its elaborate design, and above the window's detailed moulding is the right half of the Greek frieze, which displays number figures clad in togas and warriors upon horseback donning ancient Hellenistic armour. Shadows from the dentil hang down upon the rest of the entablature. Image cropped from the following image down below.

[237] Ibid, 117.

Below: The House of the Estates in its final form, as designed by Gustaf Nyström, with its tympanum by Emil Wikström. Nyström sought to make the building evoke a Greek temple, and this is successfully done through his implementation of the archetypal classical building style with pillars supporting a pediment.

Below: The Austrian Parliament Building (Das Parlamentsgebäude) as seen in Vienna, the city in which Gustaf Nyström learned a significant amount of his architectural expertise. Its Hellenistic motifs are manifest and abundant; the tympanum style is visibly similar to that of Wikström's work for the House of the Estates building in Helsinki, and the building overall is one of great closeness by way of its design. This is partially due to the simpler fact that both buildings directly borrow from archetypal Ancient Greek stylization.

Chapter 6: The Parliament House – Finland's New Political Centre

The Parliament House is perhaps the most important building in the Republic of Finland as we know it today, due to the essential role it plays in governing the republic at its highest level. Through this, it is also one of the most recognizable and imposing classical architecture constructs in both Helsinki and Finland alike. Wickberg called it Finland's "only great monumental building stamped by the neoclassicism of the 1920s," and stated that "it can be regarded as a nursery for a whole generation of builders and craftsmen."[238] Given the era in which it was built, this also makes it the first significant classical building which the independent nation of Finland constructed for itself. It was built from 1927-1931 under the supervision of architect Johan Sigfrid Sirén, a Swedish-speaking Finn who had taken up the position of chairman of the Finnish Architecture Association in 1928, and a professorship in modern architecture at the Helsinki University of Technology the same year the Parliament House was completed – a position he bested several others for, including the revered Alvar Aalto, who the university would later come to be named after.[239] Prior to this though, Sirén had been educated in Vaasa and he made numerous architectural study visits across Europe throughout the first half of the 1920s.[240] From all of the countries across the continent which Sirén toured with significant histories and advances in architecture, he notably visited two countries twice – Italy and Germany – the former being the nation in which fascism was conceived, the latter being where the ideology went on to manifest itself the strongest.[241] Given that Sirén's edifice was designed for a newly formed parliamentary republic, yet because it shares much of its 'stripped classicism' appearance with what became remembered and labelled as fascist architecture, there is much which can be assessed from the structure's implicit and explicit meanings and messages as intended by its patrons and architect.

6.1: The Turn of the Century's Architectural and Political Developments in Finland

Although the various movements of classical architecture enjoyed great popularity throughout both Finland and Europe more broadly during the 19th century, other movements and styles conceived towards and after the turn of the century came to replace the hegemonic position held by classicism. Even with the more original architectural works of the Finnish National Romanticism movement which began and continued appearing before and after the beginning of

[238] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 86, 126.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Nikula, Riitta. "Sirén, Johan Sigfrid." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 7th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=6406.
[241] Ibid.

the 20th century, other movements from Europe soon began to compete with the domestically developed patriotic style, with the French Art-Nouveau and the German Jugendstil movements in particular making significant impacts in Helsinki – the structures of which are still widely visible throughout the city today. In 1904, Saarinen, the aforementioned pupil and critic of Nyström, won the competition held for the redesigning of the Helsinki Central Railway Station, and in the words of Wickberg, the simultaneous designing of this considerable national romantic edifice and the railway station of Viipuri "marked the real end of the first Romantic era in modern Finnish architecture."[242] Some few Finnish romance structures were still constructed after this shift began, including two of the most recognizable and revered works – the National Museum of Finland which was built from 1906-1912 and Tampere Cathedral built from 1902-1907 – however, these structures and others like them were completed only after the architectural pendulum began to swing back to classicism.[243] "By the 1920s," Wickberg stated in his 1962 book *Finnish Architecture*, "neoclassicism had gained a foothold in the northern countries," and from this return to classicism the city of Helsinki received one of the most nationally important structures: the Parliament House – a building designed both to represent the newly independent nation and to house its most important offices.

Politically speaking, the years both leading up to and following 1900 were of enormous significance for the later formation of Finland as an independent nation. Three notable events which took place just before and after the turn of the century, two of which occurred in Helsinki, would directly influence more of what was to come for Finland just over a decade and a half later. Firstly, in 1899, Emperor Nicholas II – the last Romanov emperor of Russia – reduced the status of the Diet of Finland to an advisory body, increased the powers of imperial Russian legislation, and introduced laws which were to be implemented in the Grand Duchy of Finland.[244] "Up to that point in time, the Finnish Diet had the legal right to alter and reject legislative proposals that it deemed unacceptable and to determine the final content of legislation," Antti Kujala stated in *The Russian Revolution of 1905: Centenary Perspectives*, additionally explaining that the emperor – the Grand Duke of Finland – had previously shared his legislative power with the Finnish Diet, and had essentially ruled as a constitutional monarch, despite his autocratic rulership over Russia and the other realms of its empire.[245] Those in Finland largely considered these developments to be gross violations of the Grand Duchy's fundamental laws and privileges, and some even found this to be tantamount to a

[242] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 85.
[243] Ibid, 85, 101, 104.
[244] Heywood, Anthony, and Jon Smele. *The Russian Revolution of 1905: Centenary Perspectives*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 83.
[245] Ibid, 82-83.

coup d'état.[246] The aforementioned Governor General at the time, Nikolaj Bobrikov, who had just come into office the year prior, forcefully repressed the peaceful protests to these significant governmental changes.[247]

A few years afterwards, on June 16th 1904, a young Senate employee named Eugen Schauman – a nationalist of upper-class origins – shot and killed Governor General Bobrikov in a murder-suicide assassination, an act which he carried out on behalf of the Grand Duchy due to what he considered to be crimes committed against it by Bobrikov's administration.[248] Bobrikov had been seen by many in Finland as the embodiment and champion of the repressive russification policies, which for example included acts such as forcing more hours of Russian to be learned by children in schools, and due especially to what had happened just a few years before, he was greatly disliked for his stringent character.[249] His murder politically wedged the Grand Duchy and the greater Russian Empire further apart, adding to the already emergent sense of nationalism within Finland at that time, which had carried over strongly from the artistic and cultural awakening which began halfway through the century prior.[250]

Just over two years later, in late July and early August of 1906, the monumental 18th-century sea fortress of Sveaborg – known better at that time by its colloquial Fennicized moniker of 'Viapori' – became a centre of attention within the Russian Empire when a short-lived rebellion erupted there.[251] This three-day mutinous uprising, which became known as "the Sveaborg Rebellion" largely consisted of Russian military personnel with only a few Finnish nationalists joining in, and the participants had hoped to inspire yet another a revolution across the empire, as that which had taken place throughout Russia the year prior had been violently put down.[252] Much like that so-called Russian Revolution of 1905, this smaller follow-up insurrection which also ended in failure foreshadowed the full and proper Russian Revolution which would eventually materialize in 1917. Although the level of Finnish nationalist involvement was minimal in this precursor, the fact that it transpired where it did symbolized that more was to come in Finland as well.

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[246] Ibid, 83.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Niinistö, Jussi. "Schauman, Eugen." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 8th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3619.
[249] Polvinen, Tuomo. "Bobrikov, Nikolaj." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 8th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3142. ; Ibid.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 9, 197. ; Hällström, M. and Sarantola-Weiss. *Sveaborg: Samtiden och Eftervärlden*. 210.
[252] Hällström, O. *Sveaborg, Viapori, Suomenlinna.* 9, 197. ; Heywood, and Smele. *The Russian Revolution of 1905: Centenary Perspectives*. 91.

Following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in June of 1914, nearly all of Europe quickly became inundated with the outbreak of the First World War. Competing powers on the continent quickly armed themselves in response to the rivalries which had been festering for decades, and what transpired as a result quickly became the largest and most brutal war in both European and global history to that point in time, with millions dying from the new mechanized way of warfare. While the conflict brought many world-changing technological advancements to be used for this new epoch and for the future, it also brought significant political ramifications within many of the participating empires as well. What resulted toward the end of the war and which continued in the years following was a series of opportunistic revolutions and national uprisings across the continent, the largest of which took place in Russia, and which resulted in Finland being able to finally declare itself independent after a hundred and eight years of imperial rule under the Russian emperors. Shortly after this declaration of independence was made in early December of 1917, the first appointed Prime Minister of the independent Finland, Pehr Evind Svinhufvud, received word from Vladimir Lenin, the head of the newly formed Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, that the autonomy of Finland would be respected.[253]

Although this recognition was formally confirmed in early January of 1918 by Lenin and his high-level commissars, the end of that same month saw the eruption of the Finnish Civil War, which the Soviets subsequently supported the Red faction in, given that they too were socialists and communists, as opposed to the Whites, who received their support from the German Empire which was still also engaged with the ongoing world war.[254] This conflict, which lasted for only 3 and a half months was short but brutal, and it resulted in nearly 40,000 deaths alone (excluding other casualties).[255] After the White victory, Finland sought to install a king and to turn the nation back into a constitutional monarchy under an elected German prince named Friedrich Karl von Hessen, who was chosen partly to help bolster Finland's relationship with Germany, in order for the young republic to support itself with this power as an ally in the future against Russia.[256] However, with the many ongoing revolutions against monarchies across Europe in the precarious post-war years, this idea was abandoned, and von Hessen abdicated the short-lived kingship he had been given. The representative bodies of Finland then assumed a far greater importance than they had ever known

[253] Häikiö, Martti. "Svinhufvud, Pehr Evind." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 9th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=501.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Roselius, Aapo and Tuomas Tepora. *The Finnish Civil War 1918: History, Memory, Legacy*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014. 2.
[256] Saarinen, Hannes. "Friedrich Karl." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 9th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=5996.

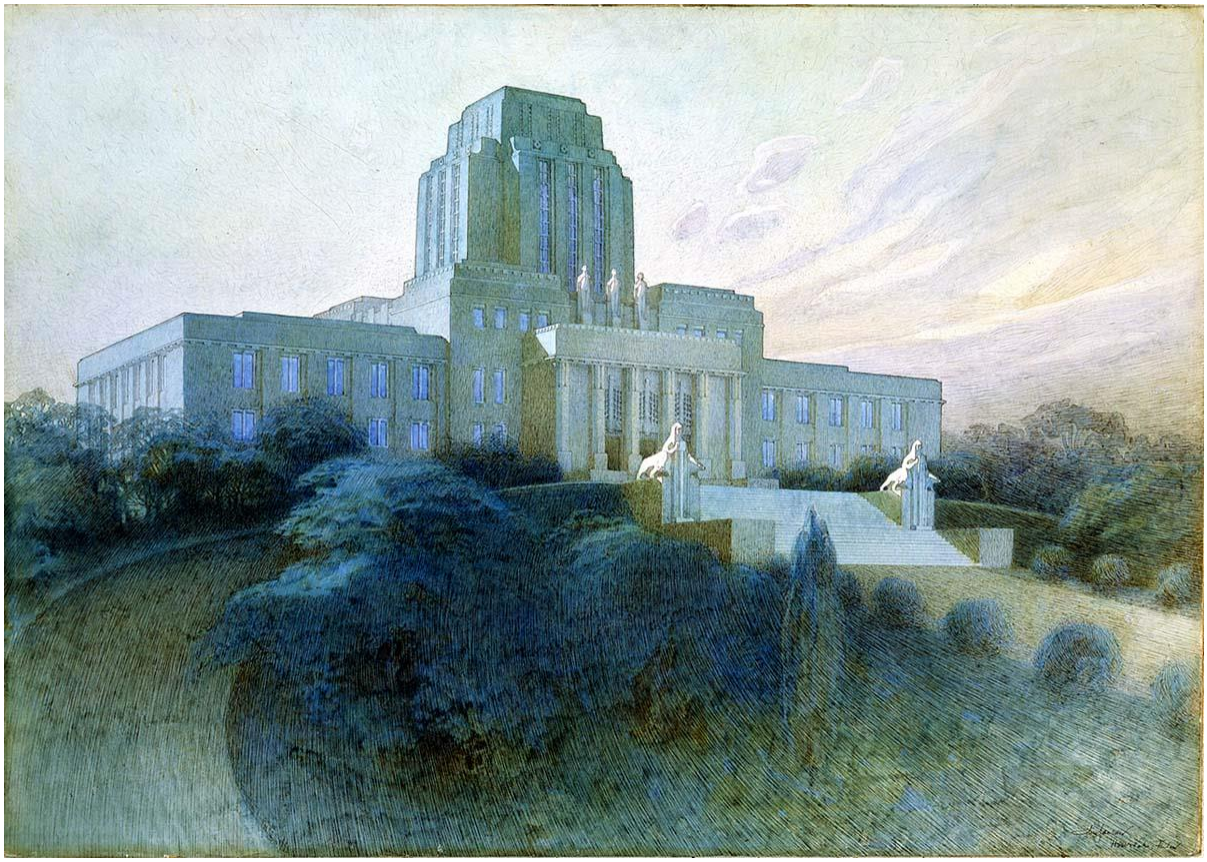
before, and the country instead became a parliamentary republic with a presidential head-of-state role as well, the first office of which was assumed in 1919 by Kaarlo Juho Ståhlberg.[257]

6.2: The Conception of the Parliament House

By 1905, Nyström's then fifteen-year-old House of the Estates was already proving too small as it could not accommodate the 200 Members of Parliament.[258] Proposals were made to expand the building, but the unicameral parliament did not approve of them, and the people's representatives found themselves back in the same position which they had been in prior, needing to rent other venues throughout Helsinki wherever they could find them whilst also planning for yet another new building to be constructed for their needs.[259] In 1908, a competition was held for the designing of this new building, which was intended to be erected upon the Observatory Hill – the same location which the earlier 1884 House of the Estates design competition had also been originally intended for.[260] The winner of this competition was decidedly Eliel Saarinen, whose entry was valued by the judges in their minutes as being "a work of art of the highest class, a monument of rare and lasting value."[261] Wickberg had also commented that this palatial proposal was "free from stylistic imitation," and that it "achieved an almost Egyptian grandeur."[262] Despite its praise, however, the plan remained on paper as Nicholas II rejected the proposal due to the fact that agreements could not be reached regarding its financing.[263]

Below: Eliel Saarinen's praised winning entry from the 1908 Parliament House competition. Riitta Nikula stated that building was designed to appear both timeless and modern, and its monumental stature would be bolstered by its elevated location upon the Observatory Hill.[264] Nils Erik Wickberg's comments from the 1960s support this, as he specifically noted the Ancient Egyptian motifs. The squared portico at the front is upheld by a row of columns which do not seem to adhere to any traditionally classical form or style.

[257] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 163. ; Tyynilä, Markku. "Ståhlberg, Kaarlo Juho." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. Webpage accessed June 9th 2020. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=626.
[258] Ibid, 163.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Archinfo Finland. "Parliament House." Finnish Architecture Navigator. Webpage accessed June 9th 2020. https://navi.finnisharchitecture.fi/parliament-house/.
[261] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 86.
[262] Ibid.
[263] Archinfo Finland. "Parliament House." Finnish Architecture Navigator. ; Wäre, Ritva. "Saarinen, Eliel." Biografiskt lexikon för Finland, 2014. http://www.blf.fi/artikel.php?id=3614.
[264] Hakala, Liisa-Maria and Pekka Suhonen. *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building.* Helsinki: Suomen eduskunta, 1990. 75.

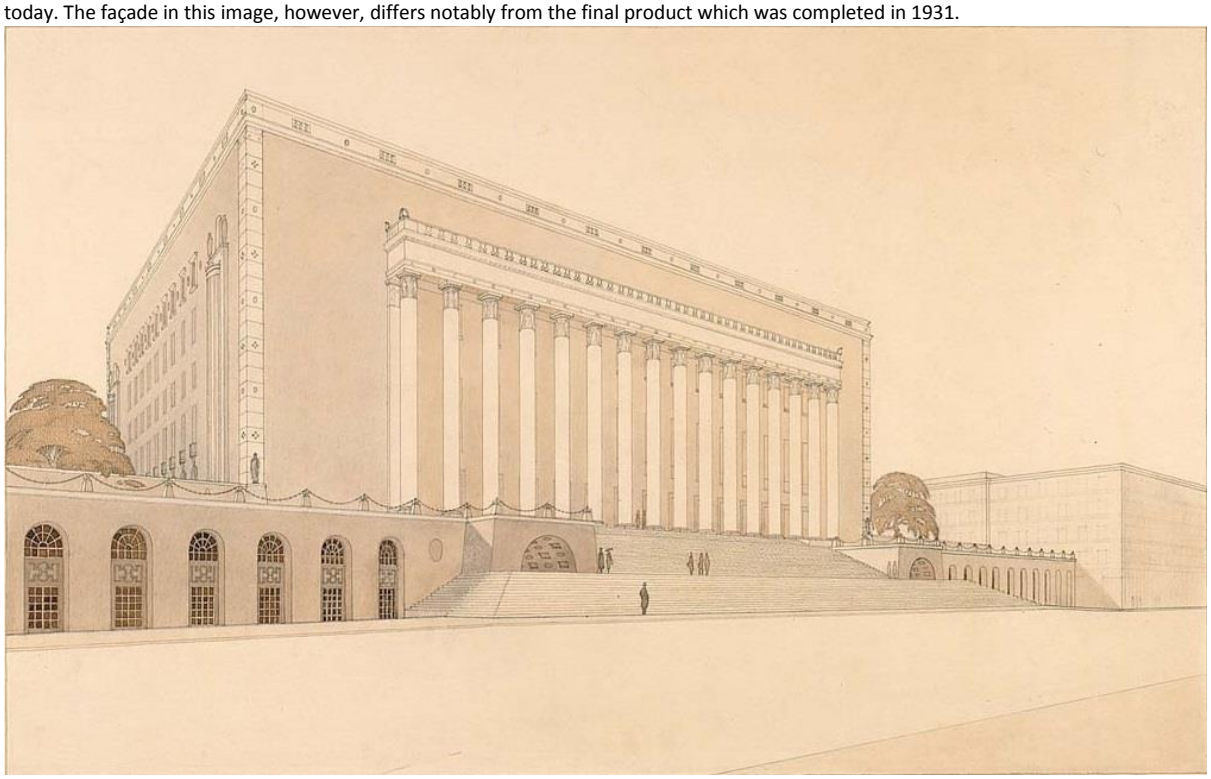


Nine years later, following the toppling of the Russian monarchy and with the separation of Finland as an independent nation, the topic for a new parliament building quickly returned to the forefront of governmental discussions.[265] Yet another competition was held in 1924, one which Saarinen entered again, however, this time the former competition winner had his entry bested by that from a firm comprised of three architects: Kaarlo Borg, Urho Åberg, and Johan Sigfrid Sirén.[266] In a small column detailing their proposal from the *Åbo Underrättelser* newspaper from Sunday April 12th 1925, it was written that the competition assessment board highly praised the design due to its simplicity paired with great monumentality, but also because it was relatively inexpensive and easily realisable.[267] As it was Sirén in particular who had taken the lead with designing the submission, he subsequently left the firm to take up the position as the lead architect of the Parliament House – that which would become his magnum opus.[268] After the thorough planning process concluded a few

[265] Helander, Karemaa, Lemström, and Pietiäinen. *Säätytalo = The House of the Estates Helsinki*. 163.
[266] Wickberg. *Finnish Architecture*. 126. ; Archinfo Finland. "Parliament House." Finnish Architecture Navigator.
[267] "Åbo Underrättelser 12. 4. 1925 no. 101." The National Library of Finland Digital Collections. Page accessed June 9th 2020. https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/sanomalehti/binding/1712262?term=Sir%C3%A9n&term=riksdagshuset&term=Sir%C3%A9ns&page=3.
[268] Hakala, Liisa-Maria and Pekka Suhonen. *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building.* Helsinki: Suomen eduskunta, 1990. 79.

years later, the cornerstone of the building was laid in April 1927 – the event of which was attended by the then President Lauri Kristian Relander, and which made for a great celebration.[269]

Below: Borg, Åberg, and Sirén's winning submission for the 1924 Parliament House competition, titled as "Oratoribus."[270] Since Sirén was the lead designer for this proposal, he also went on to be the lead architect for the construction of the Parliament House as we know it today. The façade in this image, however, differs notably from the final product which was completed in 1931.



6.3: Parliament House – Architectural Meanings and Messages

The Parliament House as we know it differs in several ways from the winning proposal seen above, and as previously mentioned, it is of a particular neoclassical style known as 'stripped classicism.' Sirén's building lives up to the name of the style well, given that it is markedly less ornate than many older classical structures which can be seen in Helsinki. Devoid of several embellishments which are typically seen on classical constructs, it instead has a more austere and imposing appearance. There are still some decorative elements, but there is neither a pediment presiding over the pillars nor a detailed tympanum within it, and there are no ornate acroterions, statues, or sculptures of any sort. The cornice which extends across the façade and which continues around the building is relatively plainer than those traditionally seen elsewhere upon other classical structures, both in Helsinki and across Europe more broadly. Additionally, along with the façade being completely symmetrical, the entirety of the building's outermost layer (save for its windows) is solely

[269] Ibid, 85.
[270] Archinfo Finland. "Parliament House." Finnish Architecture Navigator.

granite. Sirén himself said that the decision to use only granite was made from a "purely artistic point of view," and by doing so, although perhaps inadvertently, he made the building's appearance further stand out from the other classical structures in Helsinki, many of which are comprised of numerous materials of various colours and textures.[271] Although solely artistic by motive, the usage of this single material also imparts a symbolic political message about the oneness of the centralized state, and how this building is where the nation comes together as one institution under one roof. In addition to all of this, there is also no inscription to be seen upon the façade, neither to state the structure's purpose nor to evoke or suggest ancient power from a Latin phrase. Instead, the imposing colonnade does much of the speaking on behalf of the entire building.

Due to its size alone, the colonnade makes for the most identifiably classical element of this edifice. Much like typical ancient pillars described by Sir John Summerson, these upon of the façade of the Parliament House also dominate the appearance of the building, just as we have seen with those of the National Archives and House of the Estates buildings as well.[272] The capitals of these pillars are also appropriately and equally subdued – stripped down to a far simpler appearance from how they are typically portrayed, differing from those seen upon Nyström's two constructs from 1890. Judging by the designs upon them, these capitals, and thus these pillars overall, have been designed in a sort of neo-Corinthian style. There is logic behind Sirén having chosen this appearance though. Riitta Nikula, an art historian and former professor of art history at the University of Helsinki, has explained in the 1990 publication *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building* that Sirén drew inspiration for both the colonnade and for the cubic shape of the building overall from Engel's University Library (now the National Library of Finland), and through that, ultimately also from Ancient Greek temple motifs.[273]

Perhaps inadvertently through this, Sirén drew from the House of the Estates building as well, given that it too was consciously based off of the National Library building, and that it too shares the overall cubic shape that can be seen with the Parliament House. This would especially make sense for Sirén to have done due the political and representative natures of both buildings, and additionally because the Parliament House is the direct physical successor to the House of the Estates building. Although there is this evidence to support why Sirén made this decision to imitate the Corinthian nature of the revered National Library building, one is left to wonder why he did not opt for an even simpler Doric or Tuscan pillar style, as the essential point of stripped classicism is to emphasize that less is more through using strong, practical, and simple shaping. After all, Sir John

[271] Hakala and Suhonen. *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building.* 82.
[272] Summerson. *The Classical Language of Architecture*. 20.
[273] Ibid. 92, 94.

Summerson pointed out that the Tuscan and Doric orders, which are the two earliest column styles, are naturally also the simplest out of the variations.[274] Given the austere nature of the Parliament House overall, it would have made sense for Sirén to have chosen either of these styles, for, as Summerson says, the Tuscan and Doric pillars express "toughness" and "a soldierly bearing."[275]

Because of its unusual appearance, the entablature above the colonnade is also worth analysing and discussing. As Nikula describes it, this unorthodox element of the design features a row of circular windows "formed in a harmonious medallion motif" along with a thin vertical mouldings.[276] As has been discussed previously throughout this text, such as with the Student House and the House of the Estates buildings, the frieze of a classical building is typically where one sees artistic detail intended to support the overall message that the building is uttering. With the House of the Estates, for example, this was with the markedly Hellenistic art design – the style of which informs us, should we be unaware, that the primary influence for that building came from Ancient Greece. With the Parliament House, however, it is apparent that the frieze and entablature are simply there to aesthetically complement the colonnade beneath them. If one looks closely, they can see that each circular window sits above a space between two columns, and each vertical moulding sits not only between each window, but also above each pillar as a sort of upper extension on the shape and direction provided by the pillar below. This differs with the circular mouldings on the ends of the entablature, however, as these additions appear to be something of a synthesis between the two designs. Additionally, these mouldings on the ends, because of their apparent differences, match the thick rectangular columns beneath them, as they too differ from the rest of the pillars.

These wide rectangular pillars are reminiscent of those seen at the ends of the portico of the House of the Estates. Unlike those, however, which have their own respective Corinthian capitals, the Parliament House's rectangular pillar capitals are ambiguous. They appear to have their own smaller entablatures, the likes of which have similar designs to the main frieze of the entablature overhead, with small vertical and circular mouldings. This pattern is seen once again upon the aforementioned cornice which extends around the entirety of the building – that which makes up for the second most identifiable classical feature of this structure after the colonnade. Given the shapes of the colonnade pillars – straight lines and rounded cylindrical shafts – it is easy to see why Sirén chose to replicate these basic shapes for the entablature and the cornice. These are, after all, the main shapes of the building overall. Another place where these mouldings can be seen is atop the two tunnel entryways located halfway up the Parliament House's steps. Nikula has identified that

[274] Ibid. 15.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Hakala and Suhonen. *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building.* 85.

these two twin constructs are potentially allusions to the Baroque stylization of Stockholm Palace, and furthermore through that, they perhaps also ultimately take from a sort of "Egyptian austerity."[277] As one can see with the winning submission image seen above, there was also an intent to have rounded entryways for these secondary tunnels into the building, matching the two façades with arched windows on both sides of the stairs. Although the latter arched design stayed with the final product, the former was altered "to conform to the changes in the main cube" of the building.[278]

As can be seen from this chapter's analysis, many of the design elements of this structure have been made solely to support and reinforce the appearance of the façade overall, and in particular the colonnade, which dominantly defines the building as classical. What makes this building the intriguing piece that it is, and especially for its time, is that it does not align itself politically with the appearance that it has. Both before, during, and especially after the end of the Second World War, stripped classicism became commonly recognized as the style of fascism, due largely to its usage by those in Nazi Germany. Yet here in Finland, this edifice was both constructed as and continues to serve as the building which embodies and operates the nation as a representative, democratic republic. Furthermore, Finland as a nation overall is widely recognized around the world as one with many personal freedoms and prosperities – features of a society which one would not associate with fascist authoritarianism. In essence, Sirén's Parliament House represents and heads a nation which is a champion of liberal values, which sharply contrasts the narratives and associations with totalitarianism that the style of stripped classicism is otherwise thought to represent. This example goes to show just how architecture, like a great many things, is neither black nor white, and how appearances should not always be the first basis of judgement.

[277] Ibid.
[278] Hakala and Suhonen. *The Finnish Parliament: Its Background, Operations and Building.* 85.

Conclusion

Ultimately, what can be seen from the many neoclassical constructs of Helsinki discussed in this thesis is that, despite their numerous contrasts and dissimilarities, their fundamental elements make them all inseparably connected in multiple ways. Conversely, it can also be seen that the meaning and intent behind a neoclassical structure is within the eye of the beholder, or more specifically, within the eye of the creator. The same holds true for countless neoclassical constructs built across both Europe and the wider world at large, as each structure ultimately imitates and evokes the same power of Graeco-Roman stylization from antiquity, regardless of whether or not these constants were a primary intention behind the construct's creation. Additionally, in alignment with the famous words of Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan, it would appear that when it comes to neoclassical architecture (and to all classical replication architecture more broadly speaking), the medium is the message. That is, so to speak, that the essential statement of neoclassical architecture is one in the same with the style. The style is Graeco-Roman, and so too is the statement, even if altered with differing variables which were conceived from and in later eras distant from antiquity. More than anything, the visual recognisability that a structure is classical is what makes it classical; it has far less to do with structural necessity than it does with surface level appearance, and the message sent with that appearance. Both a plain, rectangular building built of red brick and a stylized neoclassical edifice which evokes the power and prestige of Ancient Greco-Roman culture can serve as a library, a university, or a government office for example, and this outer appearance does not at all effect their ability to serve their function. What it does do, however, is make a statement, even if unintended. For the former it would be a statement purely of utility, and for the latter it would be one that the institution takes its legitimacy from bygone eras. Not a single one of the structures discussed in this thesis needed to be neoclassical in order for the structure to stand and serve its internal purposes. For each of them, neoclassical stylization served a purely aesthetic purpose — one which doubly made a statement about the refinement of the culture which built it.

In the case of the Swedes with the construction of Sveaborg, and specifically with its Great Courtyard, the intention was to evoke an Ancient Graeco-Roman ethos which would speak not only to the power of Augustin Ehrensvärd, but also to the power of the King who oversaw the project, and to the realm which he ruled. The same was true for the Russian-financed Senate Square and its elaborate edifices. The structures of the Senate Square were built as utilities for the subjects of the Grand Duchy of Finland, however, the stylistic appearances of these structures ultimately served the Russian Empire, which received the prestige and association of having built this highly impressive

project, stylised in a fashion of remarkable similarity to St. Petersburg. When it came to the structures built by and for the people of Finland, such as with the Student House, Ateneum, the House of the Estates, the National Archives, and the Parliament House, we can see that the theme of neoclassicism was embraced not only because it had become recognized as the architectural face of Finland (largely and primarily due to the construction of the Senate Square), but also because, just like those two projects from prior times, each construct could be made with its own specific intents and messages, even while coming from such similar appearances.

Additionally, it is worth noting that the style does not exist without the statement, nor the statement without the style. In fact, neoclassical architecture would not exist, let alone be so widespread, were it not for the great veneration of the Ancient Greek and Roman societies. Aside from the classical ruins which still stand in some European, Near Eastern, and Northern African cities today, what else could or would possibly emit the same message of enormous Hellenistic and Roman influences, if not for the desire to replicate their styles for the associations of power which they bring? In such a way, Ancient Greece and Rome live on with these more recently erected structures in addition to those which have survived throughout the centuries, as modern cities, cultures, and societies, such as Helsinki's, were shaped with the intention of evoking these ancients while also likening the city to Europe more broadly.

Like many major cities, Helsinki is one in which the history of the nation can be seen all around. When it comes to Helsinki's neoclassical structures, not only can we see that many of them, such as those discussed in this thesis, are of great significance to the country's and city's histories, but it can also be seen that deliberate efforts were made to make Finland look a certain way before Finland became an independent entity. Specifically, and arriving from the two opposite sides of what is now Finland, both the Swedish and Russian regimes employed neoclassical architecture to impose a sense of their own respective ownerships over the land and its people. The constructs these powers erected set the precedent for style in the emerging city, and intriguingly, even the structures which were made by and for the people of Finland followed with this same style, although under the influences of different trends and epochs. The linearity is clear, largely due to the recognisability of what makes a classical (and in this case a neoclassical) structure.

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